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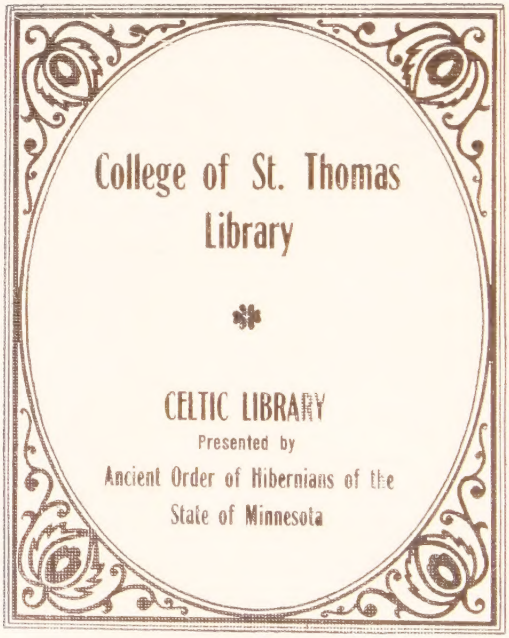

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COYNE MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP.

(*Extract from the Calendar of the National University of Ireland*).

A Fund having been raised as a memorial to the late William P. Coyne, LL.D., and it having been decided that the Memorial should take the form of a Scholarship for the encouragement of the Study of Political and Social Science, especially as applied to Ireland, the following Regulations have been agreed to by the University and the Trustees of the Fund :—

I. The Scholarship, value about £32, shall be called "The Coyne Memorial Scholarship" ; and shall be offered for competition amongst the Graduates in Arts of the University.

II. The Scholarship shall be awarded every second year to the author of the best Essay (if of sufficient merit) dealing with some branch of Political and Social Science, especially as applied to Ireland.

III. The Scholarship shall be tenable for twelve months, and shall be used in assisting the holder to pursue an investigation in some special branch of Political and Social Science, especially as applied to Ireland, the special branch chosen to be submitted by the Scholar for the approval of the Trustees.

IV. The Scholarship shall be paid in two instalments : one of twenty pounds on the award being made, and the other when, after the lapse of not less than twelve months from the date of the award, the Scholar submits to the Trustees satisfactory evidence of having pursued the line of investigation, and furnishes an original thesis on the branch of Science chosen.

Further information regarding the Scholarship may be had from the Registrar, National University of Ireland, Dublin.

INDUSTRIAL DUBLIN SINCE 1698 & THE SILK INDUSTRY IN DUBLIN

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PREFACE

One would like to bespeak for this little book a special welcome from the Irish public, and especially at the present time. It is an essay in Irish economic history: in itself of great interest, telling a tale fascinating and full of suggestion, bringing lights from the past, of value to us now, upon some of the factors of Irish industrial development, including the factor of labour. In itself the essay is all this. But it is more for what it represents that one hopes it will be welcomed. It represents an endeavour, a very modest but a systematic endeavour, to promote in Ireland a living interest in the study of political and social science. Who does not feel to-day, with the horizon that is opening around us, that that is the subject perhaps of all others the most important to have systematically studied in Ireland now? This work is a "Coyne Scholarship" essay. It is the first of the Coyne Scholarship essays to be published; others have been written by the scholarship holders during the last nine years, but this is the first which has been thought suitable for publi-

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cation. It may be the beginning of a series. One does not claim for it more than the merits of a good post-graduate thesis, which is the fruit of an original inquiry. But it is just because it is such a piece of original study, which an Irish student has been stimulated to pursue, that it has a special interest. If it meets with an encouraging reception we may hope to see it followed by other monographs like it—monographs on subjects of economic history or of political or social science—the work of young Irishmen who have been enabled to bring to their investigations minds trained in scientific method.

It may be well to mention what the Coyne Scholarship is. It is a post-graduate scholarship of the National University founded in memory of the late Mr. William P. Coyne, LL.D., who was the first Head of the Statistics and Intelligence Branch of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, and who had been a Fellow and Professor of the Royal University. Mr. Coyne's death in 1904, closing at a comparatively early age a life of high promise for his country, moved his friends to raise this appropriate memorial to him. Particulars of the scholarship are given on the fly-leaf. One of its conditions is that the holder

for the time being, having won the scholarship with an essay on a prescribed subject, must pursue an investigation for at least a year on the line of study chosen and put in a second essay on the results before he is entitled to the full amount of the scholarship. The scholarship fund is administered under a deed of trust, the present trustees being the Right Hon. W. F. Bailey, C.B.; Very Rev. Wm. Delany, S.J., LL.D.; Sir Joseph M'Grath, LL.D.; Professor Grenville A. J. Cole, F.G.S.; Mr. T. P. Gill; Professor Thomas Carroll, M.R.I.A.; and Mr. J. D. Daly.

The subject prescribed for the essay in 1911 was "The History of Industry and Employment since 1698 in any one of the following Cities:—Dublin, Cork, Galway." Mr. Webb, who won the scholarship, dealt with industry in Dublin, and selected for his subject of investigation and his second essay the Silk Industry in Dublin. The trustees, believing that these two essays, with their evidence of careful original research, were worthy of publication, decided to give such help towards this end as was open to them. The scholarship funds did not enable them to do much in this way, but they brought the matter before the Royal Dublin Society, whose encouragement

INDUSTRIAL DUBLIN SINCE 1698

I

GENERAL SKETCH

In approaching the study of the history of any particular district the student must have regard not only to the conditions prevailing therein, but also to the general conditions prevailing in the whole country of which that district forms a part. A true estimate of the influences at work in shaping the history of any place can only be formed by considering them from the point of view thus obtained. This is especially the case when we endeavour to study the history of a municipality. Its economic interests are intertwined with, and are dependent upon, those of the country wherein it is situated. The prosperity or decay of the one reacts upon the condition of the other. Hence it is that the economic history of Dublin cannot be properly studied without reference to that of Ireland as a whole.

The premier position of Dublin as the capital of Ireland is in large part due to the fact

that it was made the headquarters of the English colony in Ireland. In the course of time, as English dominion extended in this country, the position of Dublin with respect to the rest of the country became more and more important. There is scarcely another city or town in Ireland whose fortune has been so closely bound up with the English connexion as that of Dublin has been.

Down to the seventeenth century Ireland, like England, was largely a pastoral country. The inhabitants of both countries raised numerous herds of cattle, horses, sheep, and pigs. Any industries that existed were bound up with this important pursuit. The chief items of export from Ireland were animals and animal products, wool and woollen manufactures, and hides.

Notwithstanding the similarity of pursuits, the commercial relations existing between the two countries continued to be friendly down to the seventeenth century. In the legislation of England care was taken to protect the interests of Ireland. The latter country was allowed to share in the advantages accruing from the English colonies, or plantations as they were called. In fact, Ireland was treated as a sister country rather than a colony.

Commercial Restrictions.

In the reign of Charles I., however, Thomas Wentworth, the Lord Lieutenant, made an attempt to discourage the woollen trade in Ireland, so that it should not interfere with England's staple industry. He hoped thereby to cause the Irish people to become dependent upon the English for their clothing. As some compensation for the injury done to the woollen industry, he spent a large sum of money in promoting the Irish linen trade.

One would have thought that the stand made by Ireland on behalf of the Stuarts against the Parliamentary Party would have led to the tightening of the bonds of friendship between the two countries. Gratitude, however, was not a Stuart virtue.

Charles II. had hardly been seated three years on the throne when he gave his royal signature to an Act imposing prohibitive duties upon the importation into England of cattle and sheep from Ireland. The latter country was also forbidden to send any exports other than servants, horses, victuals, and salt to any of the colonies, the reasons given in the preamble to the Act being as follows:—"To make this

kingdom a staple, not only of the commodities of those plantations, but also of the commodities of other countries and places for the supplying of them, and it being the usage of other countries to keep their plantation trade to themselves." Herein we perceive the selfish note struck, a note which has resounded so loudly and so often in England's dealings with other countries. In a note in Hely Hutchinson's "Commercial Restraints of Ireland" referring to the above Act, the author remarks that as other nations did the same, Ireland was shut out from the New World and a considerable part of the Old in Asia and Africa. This Act was of only temporary duration. It was soon followed by another, the Act of 18 Charles II., which forbade the importation into England of great cattle, sheep and swine, beef, pork and bacon on pain of forfeiture. By an Act of 32 Charles II. forfeiture was extended to mutton, lamb, butter and cheese, and was made perpetual.

Driven almost entirely from the colonial trade, and from the exportation of live stock and animal products to England, the Irish people were perforce obliged to turn their attention to the only employment left to them, namely, the cultivation of the foreign pro-

vision trade and the working up of the woollen trade. For the latter of these trades Ireland was specially suited. Her fields and mountains were capable of giving sustenance to innumerable herds of fine fleeced sheep, while the art of weaving had come down through the centuries from the earliest times.

Dublin in the Seventeenth Century.

In both the provision and woollen trades Dublin, at this time, took a considerable part. Dr. Gerald Boate, in his "Natural History of Ireland," written about the year 1650, gives an interesting account of Dublin. Speaking of the city and its harbour, he says, "which harbour, although none of the best of Ireland, is nevertheless frequented with more ships, and hath greater importation of all things, than any other haven in the kingdom; by reason that all sorts of commodities are much more readily and in greater plenty vented here than anywhere else, what in the city itself, being great and populous, what into the country, for in the time of peace almost all Leinster and Ulster were wont to furnish themselves from Dublin of all kinds of provisions and neces-

saries, such as were brought in and out of foreign countries." Hence we see that even in the seventeenth century Dublin had gained the reputation of a great trading mart.

The Woollen Industry.

There is no industry, however, which has been so intimately associated with the history of Dublin as the weaving industry, and especially the weaving of wool. When Ireland in the seventeenth century turned her attention to the development of the woollen industry, Dublin became one of the most important weaving centres, if not the most important. Her special advantages in the cheapness and abundance of both raw material and labour were such that clothiers from the West of England were induced to come across and settle in Dublin, where they soon carried on a lucrative trade. In the reign of Charles II. a patent was granted for the holding of a woollen market in the Liberties. It was held in a wide street which received the name of "New Market." When peace was concluded after the Williamite war in Ireland, the woollen manufacture was established to a

considerable extent in the "Liberties" of Dublin. It was then that the Coombe, Pimlico, Spitalfields, and Weavers' Square were built. These places, which have long fallen from their high estate, were at one time the abode of wealthy merchants.

The steadily growing prosperity of the Irish woollen industry aroused the jealousy of the West of England and Yorkshire clothiers. Petitions were sent up to Parliament from many English towns praying for the restriction of the Irish woollen industry. The English Parliament took up the cause of the clothiers. Petitions were presented to King William from both Houses praying for the restriction of the woollen trade in Ireland. In his reply to the Address of the House of Commons William gave that answer, fraught with such terrible consequences to this country, and especially to Dublin: "I shall do all that in me lies to discourage the woollen trade in Ireland and encourage the linen manufacture there, and to promote the trade of England."

It is to the eternal disgrace of the Irish Parliament that it was they and not the English Parliament who struck the first blow at the flourishing woollen trade. Pressure was brought to bear on the Irish Lords Justices,

who in turn induced the Irish Parliament, a body representative only in name, and containing not a single Roman Catholic within its ranks, to pass an Act imposing an additional duty of four shillings on every twenty shillings' worth of broadcloth exported from Ireland, and two shillings extra on every twenty shillings' worth of new drapery, friezes only excepted, from 25th March 1699 to 25th March 1702. This Act did not satisfy the English Parliament, which, in the following year, passed an Act prohibiting for ever the exportation from Ireland of all goods made of or mixed with wool, except to England and Wales, and with the licence of the Commissioners of Revenue. The then existing duties in England were so heavy that this law practically amounted to a complete prohibition of the export of woollen manufactures from Ireland.

The effect of these Acts was the complete crippling of the woollen industry in Dublin and throughout Ireland. The plantation trade was gone. Now the trade with foreign countries was prohibited. England was willing to take our wool and woollen yarn in order to return it to us manufactured. The home market, the only one left, was very limited. In rural districts the inhabitants clothed

themselves with home-spun, home-made friezes. Consequently the demand for the product of the weavers' skill was restricted. Numbers of Dublin manufacturers removed themselves and their capital to foreign countries where they would be permitted to carry on their calling undisturbed. France, which had driven out her own industrious Huguenots, now welcomed the Protestant manufacturers from Dublin. Germany and Spain received their complement of the manufacturers whom hostile legislation drove from Ireland.

The efforts of the English clothiers to crush the Irish woollen industry entailed disastrous results to themselves. The Irish woollen manufacturers who went to France, Germany, and Spain, greatly improved the woollen manufactures there. Soon France was able to supply herself and vie with England in foreign markets. Arthur Dobbs, in his "Essay upon the Trade of Ireland," published about 1729, tells us that our exiled manufacturers started a system of wool running or clandestine exportation of wool from Ireland which soon reached gigantic proportions. Irish wool found its way to France and Spain, the manufacturers of which countries found it particularly suited for working up with their own into

the finest cloths. Thus England, instead of benefiting her own manufacturers, only strengthened her foreign rivals. The smuggling out of bales of wool and woollen cloth led to the smuggling in of taxable foreign commodities. Brandy, wines, spirits, tobacco, silk, and other commodities found their way into Ireland without adding a penny to the Exchequer. It was impossible to check this system, for the whole population from country gentleman to humblest peasant were in league against the laws restricting Irish industry. Dublin was not behindhand in sharing in this clandestine trade, although there the difficulties were greater and the risks much enhanced.

While other countries were profiting by these unjust laws Ireland was suffering. The records of the Irish House of Commons show that the country was in a wretched condition owing to the decay of her great industry. In 1723 a petition was presented to Parliament by the woollen drapers, weavers, and clothiers of the Kingdom praying relief in relation to the great decay of trade in the woollen manufacture. The Lord Lieutenant, the Duke of Grafton, in his speech from the throne, recommended to the consideration of the Commons the finding out of some method for the

better employment of the poor. Nothing came of the recommendation, however. In the years 1728 and 1729 there was a great scarcity of corn owing to bad harvests. Hely Hutchinson tells us that in those years many artificers and housekeepers were obliged to beg for bread in the streets of Dublin. Even when there was a good harvest the artisans of Dublin could not afford to purchase the surplus produce of the soil owing to their unemployment. Consequently farmers were discouraged from tilling, and general poverty and distress ensued.

Introduction of the Silk Industry.

The weaving industry in Dublin was happily not confined to wool alone. Dublin owes one of its oldest and few remaining industries to a colony of French Huguenots who, forced from their native land by the policy of religious persecution adopted by Louis XIV., came to and found a refuge in Protestant Dublin. The Dublin Municipal Council welcomed them, and offered them the freedom of the city. The settlement of the Huguenots dates from 1681. Here they introduced the art of silk weaving, which flourished greatly during the eighteenth century.

The Linen Industry.

In King William's memorable answer to the English House of Commons he promised to encourage the linen industry in Ireland. In the very petitions to the King from the English Parliament promises of encouragement to the Irish linen industry were held out. Ireland was to be allowed liberty to develop a comparatively new industry as a compensation for the sacrifice of an old and well-established one. Little was done by England, however, in fulfilment of her promises. What little was done seems to have been done grudgingly. Still the linen industry made great progress in Ireland during the eighteenth century, a progress which has continued uninterruptedly to the present day. It did not, however, take deep root in Dublin in spite of the fact that that city was the seat of the Linen Board which regulated the affairs of the industry throughout Ireland, and of the Linen Hall founded by the Irish Parliament for the purpose of providing a great wholesale depot for the trade. In spite of these advantages the industry did not thrive to any great extent in Dublin. The centre of the industry gradually shifted to Belfast, where a magnificent and prosperous trade was built up.

Other Industries.

So far mention has only been made of the various branches of the weaving industry which existed in Dublin at the period at which our enquiry begins. There were several other industries which we find established at the time. It is difficult now to gain much information as to the state of these industries in the early part of the eighteenth century. The Ancient Records of the city and old Dublin Almanacs throw some light upon the subject. We learn that the various arts and crafts in the city were, as in medieval Florence, organised into guilds. Representatives of these guilds sat in the Common Council of the city and directed the affairs of Dublin. In those days the Municipal Assembly was vested with more varied powers than it is at the present day. We find it fixing the prices of various necessaries of life, and fixing standard rates of wages. It may be of interest at the present day to learn that by a proclamation of the deputy Lord Mayor of Dublin, dated 27th September 1689, the following rates of wages were fixed:—For a master workman, tailor, smith, carpenter, joiner, wheelwright, and other handicraftsmen, two shillings a day; for a journeyman, fourteen

pence ; and for a common labourer, eightpence. In an old Almanac of Dublin for the year 1735 we find the following guilds having representation on the Common Council :—Trinity Guild (the guild of merchants), the Tailors', Smiths', Barber-Surgeons', Bakers', Butchers', Carpenters', Shoemakers', Saddlers', Cooks', Tanners', Tallow Chandlers', Glovers', Weavers', Sheermen's, Gold-Smiths', Coopers', Feltmakers', Cutlers', Bricklayers', Hosiers', Curriers', Brewers', and Joiners' Guilds. From this list we see how varied were the pursuits of Dublin's inhabitants. The Guild of the Merchants, called Trinity Guild, was by far the most important. It had a representation of about thirty members on the Common Council, while the other Guilds had only two, three, or four representatives. This serves to emphasise the fact that Dublin was then, as now, an important commercial centre. One cannot help remarking how varied were the industries to which the working up of the skins and hides of Irish animals gave rise. We find that there were sheermen, tanners, curriers, glovers and saddlers, all organised in their respective guilds, and sufficiently strong to obtain representation upon the Common Council. Then there was the closely associated trade of tallow chandlers.

How many of these trades are carried on to any extent in the Dublin of to-day? We are glad to notice that the brewing industry is of quite respectable antiquity in Dublin. The cutlers, goldsmiths, and felt-hat makers are now, unfortunately, an insignificant number in the city.

Dublin in the Eighteenth Century.

The trade of Dublin in the early part of the eighteenth century was fairly considerable. Dobbs, in his "Essay upon the Trade of Ireland," tells us that there were, in the year 1723, 4,612 ships, having a tonnage of 173,986 tons, engaged in trading at various ports of Ireland, of which Dublin had 1,834 ships engaged, of a tonnage of 60,758 tons, or more than half of the total tonnage. The value of Irish exports and imports he estimates at about one million sterling each.

The same authority gives us some idea of the size and population of Dublin in the early eighteenth century. There were no census returns made in those days. A valuable source of information, however, is found in the returns of the Collectors of Hearth Money. Quoting from their returns, Dobbs gives the following

as the number of houses in various years:—9,176 houses in the year 1712; 9,505 houses in 1718; 11,466 houses in 1725; 11,525 houses in 1726. There were in the year 1725, 58,507 hearths. That the overcrowding of parts of Dublin is by no means a novel feature is shown by the following remark of Dobbs:—"In the trading part of the city seventy persons have been known to live in a house, there being a family sometimes in each room, oftentimes in each floor, and in the cellars." Taking the average number to each house as ten, he says that would give a population of 110,860 in Dublin, there being 11,086 houses inhabited in the year 1725. The next authoritative statement of Dublin's population is that of Dr. Rutty in the year 1753. He gives the number of inhabitants as 128,570. A further enumeration was made in the closing years of the eighteenth century by the Reverend James Whitelaw, one of the historians of the City of Dublin. After an elaborate and carefully checked survey, he sets down the number of the inhabitants in the year 1798 as 172,091, or, including those in various institutions such as barracks, hospitals, &c., 182,370. During the century the population of Ireland increased from little over a million to about five millions.

That the population of Ireland and of its capital city should have increased so much during the century in spite of the restrictions under which its commerce and industry lay, in the face of a very severe penal code which aimed at pauperising and debasing the majority of the population, and notwithstanding the undoubted poverty of the country, is an extraordinary testimony to the difficulty which exists in checking the natural growth of a nation.

Whether Dublin was ever in a really prosperous condition for any considerable period of time during the eighteenth century seems doubtful. Yet it presents the curious aspect of a city increasing in size, in population, in commerce, in splendour, and in all the outward show of wealth. During this century were erected some of the finest buildings and handsomest streets in Dublin. The architectural beauty of the public edifices, the magnificent mansions, the beautifully laid out quares, the splendid private houses of the Georgian era, are to this day matters of wonderment in Dublin and elsewhere. Travellers who visited the metropolis and left records of their visits spoke in glowing terms of the splendour and wealth of the brilliant society there, and at the

same time wondered at the appalling squalor and poverty of many parts of the city. In the Appendix to Volume X. of the Calendar of the Ancient Records of Dublin, we find that Dublin was described in the year 1732 as being "the largest and most populous city in the imperial dominions of Great Britain, excepting the city of London." In the same Appendix we find the following statement dealing with the period 1754-1761:—"The merchants, citizens, and manufacturers in Dublin are very numerous, and many of them rich and in great credit, perfectly well understanding every branch of trade, of which their linen, woollen, silken, and hair manufactured goods are specimens." Yet we find that in 1763 the Corporation of Weavers in a petition to the Irish House of Commons, complain that, notwithstanding the great increase both in number and wealth of the inhabitants of Dublin, they found a very great decay of several branches of trade and manufactures, particularly in silk and wool. Hely Hutchinson, writing in 1779, says that in that year and the previous year above twenty thousand "manufacturers" (artisans) in Dublin were reduced to beggary for want of employment, and were for a considerable length of time supported by alms. Even under the

brief *regime* of an independent Parliament there seems to have been a great decay of industries and much poverty and misery in Dublin. In a Report from a Committee of the Irish House of Commons on the state of the manufactures of Ireland in the year 1784, there was a general complaint made as to the decayed state of many industries. The manufacture of broadcloth had fallen off by two-thirds in about ten years. The manufacture of drapery, of hosiery, and of carpets had also declined, the decline in all these cases being attributed to British competition. Only half of the looms in the silk trade were employed in that year, 1784. Numerous were the petitions sent in during the period 1782–1800, complaining of the decay and ruin of industries. A lengthy list of such petitions appears in R. M. Martin's "Ireland before and after the Union."

Irish Parliament and Industries.

The Irish Parliament, which in 1698 had struck a fatal blow at the staple industry of the country, seems very soon to have had occasion to regret its action. It was unable, however, to undo the mischief that had been done. It

was, in fact, powerless in face of the overawing supremacy of the British Parliament. Hely Hutchinson tells us that during the first twenty-one years of the eighteenth century no law was proposed for the encouragement of trade and industry. "And why?" he asks, and then supplies the answer: "Because it was well understood by both Houses of Parliament that they had no power to remove those restraints which prohibited trade and discouraged manufactures, and that any application for that purpose would at that time have only offended the people on one side of the Channel without bringing any relief to those on the other." We find, indeed, that in the sessions of 1703, 1705, and 1707 the House of Commons passed resolutions in favour of the increased use of Irish manufactures. But in all probability resolutions were as ineffectual in those days as the great majority of resolutions are at the present day. The statement that no law was proposed for the encouragement of trade and industry during the period 1700 to 1721 is not quite literally accurate. In the eighth year of Queen Anne's reign an important Act was passed for the encouragement of the linen industry, and trustees were appointed for the disposal and management of the duties granted

by the Act. These trustees formed the famous Linen Board which did so much for the encouragement of the linen industry during the eighteenth century. About the work of this Board we shall have occasion to speak later.

During the first half of the eighteenth century the Irish Parliament had little power to do anything to promote Irish industries. Owing to the distressed state of the country the Parliament found great difficulty, and very often failed, in making the revenue balance the expenditure. Hence there was little to spare for the development of the resources of the country. A national debt, which owed its origin to a grant of supply to enable the English Parliament to suppress the Jacobite rising of 1715, continued increasing for many years, and was only paid off in the year 1754. The year 1748, which brought a great European war to a close by the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, marked the turning point in Ireland's downward career. From that date her fortunes began to mend. We soon see a credit balance in the National Exchequer. The disposal of this surplus led to the famous dispute between the Crown and the Irish House of Commons. The Irish Parliament settled the dispute in a manner most satisfactory to this country.

It took care that there should be no future surplus to quarrel over by distributing any possible excess of income over expenditure in useful public works, and in the encouragement of Irish industries. It was now that the really useful and honourable part of its career started.

The Dublin Society.

Mention has already been made of the Trustees of the Linen Board and their work. Another society which began its useful career early in the century, and is still doing much useful work, was the Dublin Society. Its efforts were directed to the promotion of Irish agriculture and industries generally. It helped to dispose of some of the surplus funds of the Irish Parliament. Dublin profited considerably by the exertions of this society in the promotion of its industries.

Encouragement by Legislature.

The year 1757 was a memorable year for Dublin. In that year an Act was passed granting bounties upon the inland carriage of corn to the metropolis. Bounties were also granted upon the carriage of coal to the city. The corn

bounty Act was productive of much good. It opened a ready market to the Irish farmer for his surplus corn, and led to the development of a great corn trade in Dublin. Some idea of the magnitude of this trade may be gleaned from the fact that in the year ending 25th March 1777 over £60,000 was paid in bounties.

The efforts made by the Irish Parliament during the latter half of the eighteenth century to compensate for its great act of treachery in 1698 are deserving of all praise. The amount of money spent by it in developing the agriculture and industries of the country was enormous. According to Arthur Young, Ireland progressed more in the twenty years, 1755-1775, than she did in a century before.

Parliament was, however, powerless to remove the heavy restrictions under which Irish industry laboured. Were it not for the assistance of the Volunteers during the years 1778 to 1783 it is highly probable that the eighteenth century would never have seen Irish industry free from the thraldom in which it had lain for so many years, nor the Irish Parliament enjoying its short period of independent existence. That scene in College Green when the Volunteers appeared with their cannon de-

manding freedom of trade will be ever memorable in Dublin's political and economic annals.

The period from 1782 to 1800 was a period of progress for Ireland. We have the authority of Lord Clare in his famous Union speech for the statement that Ireland made more progress during her eighteen years of freedom than any other nation ever made in the same period. Still, as was pointed out before, Dublin does not seem to have been then enjoying a particularly prosperous time.

The Industrial Revolution.

We cannot take leave of the eighteenth century without making some reference to a great change which was taking place in industrial methods in Great Britain, and was already beginning to have some effect in Ireland, particularly in Dublin. That change was a far-reaching one, and has gained the name of "The Industrial Revolution." Inventive genius had been set to work to utilise the forces of nature and to cause machines to do the work which had previously been done by hand. Machine labour had already begun to displace hand labour. At the same time, and chiefly as a result of the introduction of machinery, we

note the change from labour in the home of the handicraftsman to labour in the workshop and factory under the supervision of an employer or his overseer. The two movements, or perhaps it would be more correct to say the two phases of the one great movement, absolutely revolutionised industrial conditions in these islands.

The Union.

The merging of the independent legislature of Ireland in the single legislature of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland in the year 1800 was a momentous Act for Ireland, and particularly for Dublin. The withdrawal of the Parliament from the Irish metropolis could not but have had important effects upon that city. Writers who describe Dublin in the latter half of the eighteenth century are unanimous in speaking in glowing terms of the brilliant society that adorned the Irish capital. Of the balls, the concerts, the dinners, and other social functions that filled up the Dublin season the most wonderful accounts are given. In dress and in equipages of various kinds a profuse and ostentatious display of wealth was made. The Irish nobility and gentry looked down upon industry and commerce of all kinds, and lived

for society alone. With the Union this brilliant society was swept away. The political and social centre of Ireland was removed to London. There were no longer brilliant orators like Grattan, Flood, and Hussey Burgh to attract the ladies and gentlemen to the House to hear their speeches and afterwards to mingle with their admirers in society. The Irish Parliament consisted of one hundred and four lords and three hundred commoners. The amount of money spent by the members of the two Houses alone was enormous. We have it on excellent authority that the Lords spent on an average £6,000 per annum each, and the members of the Lower House between £2,000 and £3,000 per annum each in Dublin alone. This would give an annual expenditure in the city of about £1,374,000. This sum is underestimated if anything. Eighty-two of the Lords kept their banking accounts with the Messrs. La Touche. The ledgers of that one-time famous banking house show an annual expenditure in Dublin alone, on the part of their wealthy customers, of £624,000. The total amount set in circulation by the whole of that distinguished society must have reached an enormous figure. Small wonder is it then that the trades which directly depended upon that society experi-

enced a rapid decline. The records of the silk trade and of the coachbuilding trade show that they were amongst the greatest sufferers. It was not, however, the mere loss of this society which mattered so much ; it was that the power to promote and encourage native industries and to protect them from unfair competition was gone. No longer was there a native Parliament to impose a protective duty when an important industry seemed on the verge of extinction. True it is that the effects of the Union were not immediately felt. Protecting duties remained in force for the first twenty years or so. Then the manufacturers of Dublin were exposed to the unrestricted competition of their English and Scotch rivals who had all the while been gaining strength while the Irish manufacturer had hardly had time to recover from the state of oppression to which they had been subjected. The period from the Union to the present day has been characterised by the gradual decay of many, and the total extinction of some, of Dublin's old-established industries. And till its population is going up !

Trade in 1816

A valuable account of Dublin, its industries and commerce, in the early year of the

eighteenth century, may be found in Warburton, Whitelaw and Walsh's "History of the City of Dublin." A short sketch of the history and of the then existing state of its chief industries is given. An interesting account of the trade of Dublin is also included. From this it appears that Dublin traded considerably with Great Britain, with the chief continental countries, with the United States, and the West Indies. The trade with England was necessarily the most important branch. It was carried on chiefly by vessels trading between Dublin and Liverpool. The chief imports consisted of seeds, steel, coal, woollen drapery, colonial and other foreign produce. Dublin sent provisions, corn, oatmeal, flour, linen, live cattle, bones, raw hides, and horns. The last three articles were returned to Dublin in a manufactured state.

A fair amount of trade was carried on between Dublin and Glasgow, which was the chief Scotch town in direct communication with Dublin. Dublin received from that city fish—chiefly cod, ling, and herrings—coal, wrought metals, and ale. In return, corn, oatmeal, and flour were sent from the Irish capital.

The two countries shared between them the honour and profit of supplying Dublin with coal. The annual importation reached a total

of 220,000 tons. To bring over this amount, 700 vessels were necessary, which generally arrived in four fleets at different times of the year. The navigation of these vessels required 5,600 men and boys. The coal was brought principally from Whitehaven, Workington, Liverpool, Irwin, Glasgow, and Swansea.

The trade between Dublin and France, we are told, had considerably fallen off at the time at which the account was written—namely, the year 1816. An immense quantity of claret had formerly been consumed in Dublin. In 1753 the import of claret amounted to 8,000 tons. The value of the bottled claret alone was estimated at £67,600. Society in Dublin must have consisted then of a hard-drinking set. Owing to increased taxation the import of French wine had decreased considerably. Before the French Revolution, from ten to twelve vessels belonging to Dublin merchants resident in Dublin, or Bordeaux, were engaged in trade, carrying wine, brandy, vinegar, turpentine, resin, corkwood, fruit, and articles of perfumery to Dublin and returning with barrels of beef, casks of butter, linen, wheat and flour. The number of Dublin vessels engaged in the trade had fallen to one in the year 1816. The

exports from Dublin were almost nil. The imports consisted of corn, wine, oil, vinegar, brandy, corkwood, fruit and kid skins, the last item being destined for the glove manufacture.

Holland sent Geneva, madder, toys and flaxseed. Our exports to that country were then of only a trifling amount.

Six mercantile houses imported directly from Italy, the Levant and the islands of the Mediterranean Sea. The trade was carried on by means of chartered vessels, which brought to Dublin oil, marble, liquorice, drugs, currants, fruits and wine. The exports from Dublin were inconsiderable.

In the Baltic trade about twenty mercantile houses were engaged. No vessel was regularly employed. The trade was carried on in British and foreign vessels. The articles imported were hemp, flax, iron, timber, tallow, bristles, isinglass, reindeer tongues and caviar from the Caspian Sea. The exports from Dublin were greatly diminished since the cessation of hostilities in 1815. During the war wines from France and Portugal used find their way to the countries surrounding the Baltic *via* Dublin. In a note on the trade the authors remark that there had been a considerable importation of hemp into Dublin where it was worked up by the rope-

makers, who received many orders from foreign vessels. Owing to the duty on hemp being lower in Ireland than in England, the Dublin ropemakers were able to supply cordage for ships much cheaper than the English manufacturers could. An import duty of £10 per ton lately imposed helped to crush the trade and to do much damage to the fishing industry.

Trade with the United States was confined principally to New York, and was generally carried on in American vessels. The imports consisted of tobacco, flaxseed, corn, cotton, pearl ashes, tar, resin and turpentine. Timber was imported from Canada. The exports were glass, coals, hay, lime, bricks, manufactured iron goods, and linen.

To the West Indies Dublin merchants sent glass, foreign wines, provisions, soap, candles, linen, and coarse manufactured cotton for slaves. The imports were sugar, rum, cotton and coffee. This trade had formerly been carried on through Liverpool, but of late direct communication had increased. Two Dublin vessels traded directly to Jamaica. Ten traded to Barbadoes, Antigua, Trinidad and other islands. Besides these vessels eighteen more, not belonging to Dublin, but chartered by Dublin merchants, were engaged in the direct

trade. With Africa no trade was carried on. The Dublin merchants were not engaged in the slave trade either through poverty or principle, as the historians remark.

A considerable coasting trade was carried on in the year 1816.

Dublin's trade naturally brought a considerable accession of wealth to the exchequer. The average daily receipts of duties for the period 1811–1816 amounted to £4,000.

Speaking of the effects of the Union upon the trade of Dublin, the historians remark that there was a general impression abroad that it had decreased, whereas, as a matter of fact, the opposite was the case. Figures are given as to the number of ships invoiced in the port of Dublin in the years 1784, 1800 and 1816. In the year 1784, at a period when the restrictions on Irish trade were removed, 2,803 ships were invoiced in the port of Dublin. Their combined tonnage amounted to 228,956 tons. In the year 1800 there were 2,779 ships having a tonnage of 280,539 tons. In 1816 the number of ships had increased to 3,164 and the tonnage to 318,142 tons. During the period subsequent to the Union the commerce of Dublin had increased by more than one-eighth. The customs duties collected at the port of

Dublin in the year 1784 amounted to £485,039. In 1800 they amounted to £826,848. In the year 1816, £1,309,908 was collected.

A New Era.

The period from 1821 to 1826, which saw the gradual extinction of the protective duties granted at the time of the Union was also remarkable for the inauguration of a new era in Dublin's economic history. The year 1824 witnessed the establishment of the first regular service of steamers between Ireland and England. These steamers plied between Dublin and Liverpool. The introduction of the steamship service between these two important cities was due to Mr. C. W. Williams, founder of the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company.

Free Trade.

The establishment of free trade between Great Britain and Ireland and the introduction of a steamship service were two of the most important events in the economic history of Dublin during the nineteenth century. Free trade led to greatly increased commerce between England and Ireland, a commerce which was

facilitated and developed to an enormous degree by the introduction of steam-ship communication between the two countries. The voyage between Dublin and Liverpool, which formerly took a week to perform, was now accomplished in fourteen hours. The importance of this fact can only be realised when one considers what a large proportion of the produce of the soil of Ireland is of a perishable nature, and as such unable to stand a voyage of a week's duration. Fruit and vegetables, poultry, eggs, honey and other articles of farm or garden produce now found a ready market in the rapidly growing industrial towns of Lancashire and Yorkshire. The trade in live cattle which has since reached such enormous proportions now began. The greater part of all this new traffic passed through Dublin, whose commerce experienced considerable development thereby.

While the commerce of Dublin was being thus stimulated and strengthened some branches of its industry received a set back. Dublin was behindhand in the establishment of machinery as a substitute for hand labour. As a consequence the industries of the city were unable to compete with the machine-made goods, which were manufactured on such an extensive scale on the other side of

the Irish Sea. In the very year after the introduction of steamship communication between England and Ireland a panic occurred in the former country, with the result that the English cloth manufacturers having considerable stocks of unsaleable goods on their hands dumped them upon the Dublin market. The Dublin manufacturers were unable to hold out against the competition of these goods, which were sold in many cases under cost price. Most of them stopped work for the time, and many of them were ruined. Needless to say, the weavers of Dublin suffered considerably thereby. The woollen trade received a blow from which it never recovered. The silk trade was reduced to inconsiderable dimensions. The full effects of the increased commerce between Dublin and Great Britain were not immediately felt. Indeed it is only now that they are beginning to be realised. It is to this traffic that we may attribute the gradual extinction of many of Dublin's minor industries. It is pleasant, however, to record that there are others which have benefited considerably thereby. The distillers and brewers of Dublin were thereby enabled to build up a huge trade. Dublin biscuits and mineral waters, industries of nineteenth century growth, are almost as well

known throughout Great Britain as they are in the city of their manufacture.

The great change which was taking place in the conditions of industry in Dublin was not produced without much hardship and distress. In a report from a Select Committee on the state of the poor in Ireland made in the year 1830, we are told that the most severe pressure of the existing distress was to be found in Dublin and other cities and great towns. This distress was stated to have arisen from two causes, the influx of paupers from the agricultural districts and the diminished profits of manufacturing industry. The Committee state that distress had been more or less prevalent in Dublin for many years. In a passage quoted by the Committee the following occurs:—"The great distress of the poor of Dublin has resulted from the decay of manufactures that existed there, and from their transit to other situations, and from some modes of labour, that had hitherto existed, being altogether superseded by the introduction of machinery." The Committee considered that it was vain to think that the rude hand labour of Ireland could compete with the machinery of Great Britain. The only hope of the country lay in the speedy application of machinery. As this was impeded

by the duty on coal, the Committee recommended the repeal of the coal tax.

According to the evidence supplied to the Committee we learn that the silk manufacture was then (in 1830) the chief manufacture in Dublin. The chief branch of the silk manufacture which the Dublin manufacturers engaged in was cabinet making. Unfortunately that article had of late years gone out of fashion. The superiority of the English manufacturer in machinery and capital rendered it almost impossible for the Dublin manufacturer to compete with him now that free trade existed between the two countries. The Dublin manufacturer had only a limited domestic demand. Even at home he was being undersold by the British manufacturer. The demand on the Continent and in America for Irish cabinets was reduced by foreign restrictions on importation.

The woollen and cotton manufactures were still carried on to some extent in Dublin. There were two extensive woollen manufactories worked by steam. There was also a cotton manufactory employing four hundred hands. The disadvantage under which Dublin laboured in the application of machinery was exemplified in the case of Mr. Willans,

a woollen manufacturer. This gentleman carried on the woollen industry both in Dublin and in Leeds. In Leeds coal cost him only five shillings a ton, while in Dublin it cost him twenty shillings for the same amount. Mr. Henry, the cotton manufacturer, estimated that his coal cost him £2,500 more than it would have done in Glasgow. Hence there was a premium of £2,500 held out to induce him to embark in trade in Great Britain. The distillers were at this time far from prosperous. They had to compete with the Scottish distillers who had to pay no duty on coal.

Condition of Hand-Loom Weavers.

Much light is thrown upon the condition of industry in Dublin in the early half of the nineteenth century by the Reports of two Committees which held enquiries in Dublin in the year 1838. One of these was a Committee appointed to take into consideration the condition of the hand-loom weavers in the United Kingdom. A special representative was sent to make enquiries in Dublin. The other was a Select Committee appointed to enquire into the existence of combinations amongst workers in Dublin.

From the former of these Reports it appears that the hand-loom weavers of Dublin were in a distressed condition in the year 1838. Employment was very irregular. The majority of the weavers were generally idle for about three months in each year. Their hours of labour were long—fourteen or fifteen hours a day. Their remuneration was small, averaging from ten to fifteen shillings a week. The various branches of the weaving industry, silk, woollen, linen and cotton weaving had all decayed. The last of these was approaching extinction.

Mr. Otway, the special Commissioner who investigated the state of the hand-loom weavers in Dublin, attributed the decay of the silk and woollen industries to the want of foresight on the part of the English, Scotch, and foreign settlers who carried on these industries in Ireland in excluding the native population from them. This exclusive system destroyed the basis of all manufacturing industry, the home market. The fabrics introduced by the English and French settlers were of a superior quality. The foreign manufacturers, instead of helping to cultivate the taste of the Irish people for goods of a higher quality, only depressed their condition, thus blindly depriving themselves of the market at home. The

Irish people continued to use the ruder and cheaper fabrics woven by themselves. Hence the manufacturers were forced to rely on the foreign market. Here they came into competition with English merchants, whose jealousy they aroused. The English manufacturers succeeded in having the Irish trade placed under restrictions. The Act of William and Mary prohibiting the export of woollen goods destroyed the Irish woollen manufacture, simply because it depended upon foreign sale for its support. The Irish legislature tried to supply the want of a home market by bounties, duties and premiums. The manufacturers lost self-reliance. The quality of the goods was allowed to deteriorate, and the industry began to decay. The woollen industry had almost expired before the protecting duties were withdrawn in 1823. It was, however, beginning to revive in 1838, and in Mr. Otway's opinion, was advancing towards a healthy condition.

On the subject of bounties and protective duties Mr. Otway expressed himself strongly. It was to the system adopted by the Irish Parliament of protecting and encouraging industry that he attributed the decay of the weaving industry in Dublin. Speaking of this system, he said, "Towards the close of the

eighteenth century the principles of free trade began to advance, and the futility of prohibitions and bounties, to prop a falling, or advance a prosperous trade, became daily more apparent. The rebellion of 1798, and the agitation of the question of the Union, put a stop to manufacturing industry. The manufacturers and operatives, apprehensive of a decrease in their home market (already limited), as a consequence of the Union and the withdrawal of many of the nobility and gentry, upon whose favour the silk manufacturers principally depended, clamorously demanded compensation and an increase and continuance of those bounties under which their trade had diminished." The manufacturers succeeded in having a new scale of prohibitions and bounties granted for a period of twenty-one years from the time of the Union. In this way trade was bolstered up and rates of wages kept up for some time. Free from the evil effects of bounties and prohibitions, Mr. Otway believed that the silk and woollen industries would enter upon a prosperous state. Had he lived long enough he might have seen the woollen industry completely crushed out, and the silk industry struggling along at only a fraction of its former size under the system of free trade.

The absence of a middle class in Ireland was a point upon which Mr. Otway laid emphasis. This was another cause of the want of vitality shown by Irish industries.

Combinations of Workmen.

On the subject of combinations on the part of workmen to control the conditions of employment he had also a word to say. He had received much evidence on this subject from silk manufacturers. In his report he says:—"It cannot be doubted that illegal and dangerous combinations amongst the workmen have operated most injuriously on the trade, driven many of the most extensive manufacturers out of it, and deterred others from directing that capital and intelligence towards it, by which alone it could be preserved or enabled to compete with the other silk weaving districts of the Empire. If not checked, the system will speedily drive away the portion of the silk trade which now remains."

Combinations of workmen to regulate rates of wages and conditions of labour were by no means new in Dublin. Just as in England, the law in Ireland continued for a long time to be opposed to combinations of workmen for any

purpose connected with their employment. Several Statutes during the reigns of George II. and George III. were aimed at the crushing out of combinations. Irish artisans shared with their British fellow workers in the great victory of 1824 when all anti-combination laws were repealed. This freedom to combine gave a great fillip to trade societies in Dublin. Sydney and Beatrice Webb in their work on Trades Unions tell us that in 1824 the Dublin trades were the best organised in the United Kingdom. The members of the different societies ruthlessly enforced the bye-laws for the regulation of their respective industries. Instead of the employers controlling the conduct of their own businesses the different societies tyrannized over the masters. The various trade societies in Dublin were allied together, and were directed by a secret committee known as the "Board of Green Cloth," which was the terror of employers.

About the year 1838 the trade societies of Dublin gave rise to serious complaints on account of their attempt to establish an effective monopoly in certain skilled industries. A vigorous attack made upon them by Daniel O'Connell led to the appointment of a Parliamentary Committee which held sittings in

Dublin. Two volumes of evidence were published, but no report was made.

The chief points of dispute between the masters and men were the rates of wages to be paid, the number of apprentices to be employed, the method of payment, that is, by time or by piece-work, and the employment of men who were not members of a recognised trade society. On all these points the men claimed to legislate. It was for the employers to obey. So tyrannical was the conduct of some of the societies that it drove many employers out of business. The damage done to the industry of Dublin by these combinations of workmen cannot well be estimated. Many industries were restricted in their scope. One trade, at least, a trade which might have developed to a considerable extent as it did under more favourable auspices in Belfast, was lost to Dublin for a considerable number of years—namely, the trade of ship-building.

Mr. Otway received a good deal of evidence on the subject of combinations of workmen. In order to give some idea of how the silk industry was restricted, it may be well to quote some of the evidence which was given. Alderman Abbott, for many years one of the most extensive silk manufacturers and mercers

in Dublin, stated that he had to leave the trade owing to the effect of combinations. He says in his evidence: "Up to 1829 I was engaged in the wholesale silk trade employing a large number of looms; imported my own silk and had it manufactured here. I left the trade in consequence of the combinations amongst the workmen. I called my weavers together, and they agreed to make a considerable reduction in the price of weaving; when they got the work out for the winter's trade, the committee of the combinators took the shuttles from them, and would not allow them to finish their work in the looms until I agreed to give the full London prices; in consequence of which I did not think it safe any longer to continue in the trade, and I retired from business." Again, he says, "I attribute the withdrawal of the trade in whole silks to the combinations of the men who would not work at Manchester prices, but insisted on London prices, which the manufacturer could not afford to give."

A Mr. McConnell, silk manufacturer, gave evidence of a similar nature—"I myself about nine months ago made an agreement with men (who solicited me) to give them work under the usual price, trade being remarkably low. The body got information, and called a general meet-

ing on that business, and came to the unanimous resolution at the meeting that no person, for the future, should work for me. These resolutions were passed, and in a few nights after my works were consumed by vitriol thrown in through the windows by unknown persons, and no person connected with the trade would work for me for fear of the body." The *modus operandi* of the combinators was thus explained by Mr. McConnell:—"Part of the combination committee of each trade is in connection with a general combination committee, or body of all trades. To this each trade that has formed a body or union sends its delegates: and generally, when any of their laws are to be enforced against any one who has come under their displeasure, the person to punish and the punishment is pronounced and awarded by persons connected with totally different trades and pursuits."

It was stated in evidence that many Dublin weavers had emigrated to England in order to escape the tyranny of these combinations.

A gentleman named Mr. Hardy, who carried on the largest printing establishment in Dublin, complained that the conduct of his business was taken out of his hands, and was in the hands

of his employees directed by their society. The society of printers limited the number of apprentices, demanded a minimum wage of 30s. a week, and refused to allow any man not a member of the society to work with society members. Mr. Hardy complained that bad workmen had to be paid on the same scale as good men. An employer could make no distinction. In consequence of annoyance received in the conduct of his business this gentleman gave up several undertakings, thereby curtailing the development of his business. Were it not for the society he would have employed double the number.

In the year 1836 the printers' society sent round a circular to the master printers declaring that no office should henceforth employ more than four apprentices, no matter how numerous the journeymen were.

According to the evidence of the secretary of the society, out of 260 men only 140 had permanent employment.

There was no industry, however, whose development was prevented so much as that of ship-building. The number of apprentices in this trade was kept at a ridiculously low level, and the rate of wages maintained very high. The conduct of the ship-carpenters' society

was so tyrannical and short-sighted that they drove away the ship-building industry from Dublin. One gentleman who gave evidence, a Mr. Morton, said he had to leave the trade through bad business brought about by the men engaged in the trade. In the year 1825 an apprentice whom he had employed was murdered in the broad daylight. He also complained that he had to pay the most worthless men at the same rate as the best men. If a man came to him asking for employment and it was refused, all the other men might turn away.

This spirit of combination ran through nearly every trade, skilled and unskilled, and was sometimes carried to a ridiculous extent. On the Royal Canal a system existed whereby the crew were bound to the boat. The owners could not dismiss a man from his boat. No other would be found to take his place. The only remedy was to sell the boat and get a new one. A similar system existed amongst brewers' draymen. The men were bound to the horses and could not be parted from them.

To carry out the rules of any society, resort was often had to acts of violence. Employers who came under the society's ban and men who

refused to join the society were beaten in the streets, property was destroyed, shops wrecked, glass broken, and property thrown on the public streets. A secret society existed in Dublin called "the Welters" whose sole object was to enforce the decisions of combinations. A man to be beaten was identified by his own comrades and then attacked by "the Welters." It is sad to record that several lives were lost in these trade disputes.

Such was the way in which industry was carried on in Dublin in the early half of the nineteenth century. That any industry could be prosperous under such a "Reign of Terror" would be a matter of wonder. This question of combinations amongst Dublin workmen has been entered into in some detail in order to show that it is not to external forces alone that Dublin may attribute the decay of many of its industries, but largely also to the conduct of the workers, conduct begotten of ignorance. Happily, acts of intimidation have lessened in Dublin, although they still break out from time to time. A little instruction in the elementary schools regarding the fundamental principles upon which society is based might tend to diminish conflicts between employers and workers in Dublin and elsewhere.

The Construction of Railways.

Before the nineteenth century had run half its course, another event, or rather series of events, occurred which deserve an important place in Dublin's economic history. The forties of last century witnessed the construction of railways on a great scale throughout Ireland. Already one railway, that from Dublin to Kingstown, had been constructed and had proved a success. Now, the whole country was opened up by a series of railways having their centre in Dublin and radiating north, south, and west. Dublin was thus placed in a splendid position for tapping the resources of the country, and would seem to have been about to enter upon a period of unparalleled prosperity. Unfortunately Dublin did not reap the golden harvest which might have been expected. The construction of the railways synchronised with the great famine of '46 and '47, which struck such a terrible blow at the prosperity of the country. This was followed by the free trade era, which had such disastrous consequences for the farmers of Ireland. They were unable to compete in the English markets, or indeed at home, with the produce brought from the rich virgin soil of

America and Australia, or from the great Russian wheat belt. Land went out of cultivation. The peasantry deserted the countryside. The great majority of them went to foreign lands, but many flocked to Dublin, induced by the great facilities of communication offered by the railways, and there they helped to swell the ranks of unskilled labour, and to overcrowd the existing scanty housing accommodation of Dublin's working population. This exodus from the country and influx into the capital has been going on to the present day.

There is no doubt, however, that Dublin has gained considerably by the opening up of the country by the railways. Its position as a great trading centre has been strengthened. A considerable portion of the commerce of Ireland finds its way through Dublin.

Industrial Commission, 1885.

Another of those Commissions, the chief result of whose labours seems to be to provide the student of Irish economics with materials for his study, was held in the year 1885. The object of this Committee was to make an enquiry into the state of Irish industries generally. This Committee, on account of

having received insufficient evidence, published no report, but recommended their own reappointment for the purpose of taking further evidence.

Incomplete as was the evidence received by the Committee there seems to have been a consensus of opinion that there was a general state of decline in Irish industries. Sir Robert Kane, who was one of the principal witnesses examined, said that the thriving state of the brewing and distilling industries in Ireland was an exception to the general state of decline. Evidence was given showing that many of Dublin's industries had suffered severely from outside competition. The tanning industry was mentioned as one of the greatest sufferers. The boot and shoe industry had also declined. The coachbuilders and silversmiths complained of foreign importations which had grievously affected their business. The paper mills of the Dodder district were stated to be in ruins. The poplin industry was carried on on a much less extensive scale than formerly. Other industries which had suffered severely were those of glass-making and flour-milling. It is unfortunate that the remaining Dublin industries were not passed in review so that it might be possible to strike a balance between

the gains and losses under the Free Trade *regime*. On the whole the balance would seem to be unfavourable.

Industrial Revival.

A few years ago a movement was set on foot to bring about a revival of Irish industries. That movement had the support of the Gaelic League, the Sinn Fein party, and other bodies, and was eagerly welcomed by the Irish people. A gradually increasing demand for Irish-made goods set in, and has already been productive of some good in Dublin. The movement is still too young, however, to have had a very marked effect upon native industry. It is, however, pregnant with enormous possibilities for good in which no doubt Dublin will be a sharer.

Increase of Population.

The population of Dublin, which was estimated at 167,899 inhabitants in 1804, showed a steady increase at each census period up to 1851, when the population was given as 261,709. The great decline in the population of Ireland which set in after the famine period was not

felt so much in Dublin as in other parts of the country. The census of 1861 showed a decrease of close on 7,000. In 1871, 8,482 fewer inhabitants were recorded, the population being estimated at 246,326. The turning point must have been reached about that time, for the 1881 census showed an increase of 3,276. This gain was not maintained, however, as in 1891 the population was down to 245,001. The city of Dublin, which up to this time had been practically bounded by the Circular Road, received a considerable addition in the year 1900, when by Act of Parliament the outlying districts of Clontarf, Drumcondra, Glasnevin, and Kilmainham were added. Accordingly, the census of 1901 showed a considerable increase, the population being estimated at 290,638. The 1911 census showed a large increase, the population of the city of Dublin being then 304,802.

Having now given a general sketch of the chief features which marked Dublin's economic history since 1698, it may be interesting to give a short sketch of some of the chief industries, showing the changes which they have undergone during that period. We shall begin with the woollen industry which was one of the oldest and greatest in the city.

II.

THE WOOLLEN INDUSTRY.

From a very early age the Irish people engaged in the manufacture of woollen cloth. In point of antiquity it ranks with cattle-breeding and agriculture. One of the earliest specimens of the Irish woollen manufacture, a scarlet mantle supposed to have been worn by St. Brigid, one of Ireland's patron Saints, is still preserved in a glass case in an ancient cathedral in the city of Bruges. As early as the reign of Henry III. an export trade in woollen goods was carried on with England. There is trustworthy evidence that Irish woollen goods found their way in the fourteenth century to distant Italy, a country then famous for its woollen manufactures. It is not surprising, therefore, to find the woollen regarded as Ireland's staple industry in the seventeenth century. Dublin was at that time one of the chief centres of the trade. Such were the advantages which Dublin possessed in the obtaining of raw material for the manufacture, cheap labour and cheap food, that woollen manufacturers from the west of England were

induced to come across and settle in Dublin. The seventeenth century saw the woollen manufacture at its highest state of prosperity in Dublin. That prosperity unfortunately was not destined to continue. The flourishing condition of the industry aroused the jealousy of English manufacturers who could scarcely cope with the Irish product. Through their influence that repressive legislation was enacted which reduced the manufacture of woollens in Dublin and elsewhere to only a shadow of its former greatness. Denied the liberty of exporting woollen cloth, the Dublin manufacturers found themselves practically without a market except that existing at their own doors. The country people for the most part continued to clothe themselves with coarse frieze cloth of their own manufacture. Small wonder is it then that we find numerous complaints of poverty and distress existing in the city, which was once the headquarters of the industry. In O'Connor's "History of the Irish Catholics" it is stated that about 1608 the woollen manufacture was giving employment to 12,000 Protestant families in Dublin. Many of these were compelled by stress of circumstances to remove themselves and their capital to other countries where they were eagerly welcomed.

Driven from the lawful exercise of their industry, the Irish people were compelled to resort to illegal means of carrying it on. Many a bale of wool and roll of cloth found its way secretly, and sometimes openly, out of the country. Still the trade languished and nowhere more than in Dublin. Petitions to the Irish Parliament for relief were of little avail to the unemployed weavers. Many were reduced to beggary and endured the horrors of starvation. Notwithstanding the distressed state of the Dublin weavers, English manufactured cloth found its way in large quantities into the city. The exasperated weavers sometimes had recourse to acts of violence. The Calendar of the Ancient Records of Dublin gives instances in 1734, 1735, 1749 and other years when the weavers attacked the houses of merchants supposed to have stocks of English manufactured cloth. Even persons who were supposed to be wearing garments of that hated cloth were attacked in the streets and had their clothes torn, cut, or even burnt. The British Government, finding it impossible to check the system of wool running was reluctantly compelled in 1739 to pass an Act taking off the duties from woollen or bay yarn exported from Ireland except worsted yarn of two or more threads.

From the year 1699 the decline of the Liberties of Dublin, the once famous seat of the woollen industry, set in and has been going on to this day. A slight check in the decline occurred about the year 1760, when the use of Spanish wool was introduced. A brisk trade was carried on for some years in goods manufactured from this wool. The Yorkshire merchants, however, induced the Dublin shopkeepers to stock English cloths by giving them longer credit. The Dublin trade in consequence sank again to the manufacture of coarser articles.

The year 1773 was a memorable year for the manufacturers of the Liberties. In that year the woollen manufacture was taken under the patronage of the Dublin Society. A woollen warehouse was opened in Castle Street, in which were deposited superfine cloths made of Spanish wool, refines of a mixture of Spanish and Irish, cashmeres, and livery cloths of all descriptions. Through the influence of the Dublin Society steady encouragement was given to the home consumption of Irish manufactured cloths. A regular trade was thus again established in the Liberties. According to evidence given before a Committee appointed by the Irish House of Commons, 374 looms, each requiring several

individuals, found employment in the year 1775.

The trade seems to have received only a temporary fillip in 1773. It underwent many fluctuations from that time, sometimes enjoying comparative prosperity, at other times sinking very low. It must have been very bad in the years 1778 and 1779, for at that time Hely-Hutchinson tells us there were 20,000 "manufacturers" in Dublin unemployed and supported for a considerable length of time by alms. That number doubtless included many woollen weavers. In 1784, according to a Report from a Committee on the state of Irish manufactures, there were not one-third of the looms employed that were at work in 1773 or 1774. In the previous year, 1783, a petition from the broadcloth manufacturers of Dublin represented them as being in a state of unparalleled distress. Several petitions were received during the period 1782–1800 from those engaged in the woollen and worsted industries complaining of decay of trade, unemployment and great distress. The number of master clothiers in the year 1792 is given as sixty in Warburton, Whitelaw and Walsh's "History of Dublin." According to that authority there were then upwards of 400

broad looms which employed 5,000 persons, and, in addition, there were 100 narrow looms employed on cashmeres, cassinettes, and beaver druggets.

It was about this time that machinery was first introduced into the Dublin woollen industry. This fact might account for some of the unemployment mentioned in the petitions to the Irish legislature.

About 1790 the Irish woollen clothiers secured from the Government a concession long withheld. The Privy Council issued an order that henceforth the Irish army was to be clothed with Irish cloth. Many contracts were given to manufacturers in the Liberties with great benefits resulting therefrom. The contracts, however, soon fell into the hands of one or two large houses having influence with the Government. They soon came to regard themselves as having a vested interest in the contracts for the clothing of the Irish army. The quality of the cloth supplied was allowed to deteriorate. Owing to negligence and mismanagement one of the Government contractors, a Mr. Hoskins, failed in 1810. We are told that his failure brought about the bankruptcy of almost the entire woollen trade of Dublin. The credit of the whole trade

received a great shock, from which it took some time to recover. In 1816, according to the authority just quoted, the woollen manufacture was in a low state, only 170 looms out of 700 being employed.

In the process of the woollen manufacture as then carried on there were certain stages when the material had to be sized and dried. The usual mode of effecting that was to suspend the material on tenters or hooks in the open air. Owing to the humidity of the climate work was often brought to a stand-still, and all the looms thrown idle, with much consequent misery to those engaged in the manufacture. At length, in 1815, owing to the generosity of one of those many public spirited citizens of whom Dublin is so justly proud, a Tenter house was erected in Brown Street, and handed over to a body of Trustees, who only charged a small fee to cover expenses. The donor of this magnificent and useful gift was a Mr. Pleasants, whose name was long remembered with gratitude in the Liberties of Dublin.

In a Report of a Committee of the Dublin Society, published in 1820, we find that a factory had been lately established in Linen Hall Street for the spinning of worsted yarn. Dublin silk manufacturers had been importing

several hundred thousand pounds worth of worsted yarn for use in the manufacture of tabinets, bombazines and stuffs. All the worsted yarn in the new factory of Messrs. Coyle and Kirby was bought up by the silk manufacturers, who found it of excellent quality, and had a demand for ten times the quantity then turned out. There were at the time of the Report between 200 and 300 persons who were formerly mendicants, employed in this factory.

The crash in the woollen trade in 1810 resulted in the crushing out of several of the smaller manufacturers. The trade was now concentrated in the hands of a few individuals, who carried on business on the most up-to-date lines with a considerable amount of capital.

In the Appendix to the Fourth Report of the Commissioners appointed to enquire into the Revenue, published in 1822, it is stated in a paper handed in by Mr. Haughton that there existed in and about Dublin at that time 45 manufacturers, having 92 billies, employing 2,885 work people, on whom depended for support 7,386 individuals. These manufacturers had a combined output of 29,312 pieces of cloth of various qualities which were valued

at £336,380. The capital invested in buildings and machinery amounted to £195,900.

Since the Union the Irish woollen manufacturers had been protected by duties imposed upon the importation into Ireland of English and foreign cloth. This protection lasted down to the year 1823, when the duties ceased. The effect of their removal was not felt until 1826. In the previous winter a great panic occurred in England, with the result that many English cloth manufacturers disposed of their stocks at any price. Vast quantities of woollen cloth were brought across to Dublin where the market was glutted with that commodity. The cloth was sold at less than cost price. In the face of such competition it was impossible for the Dublin manufacturers to hold out. Work was brought to a standstill, and many of them were ruined. The year 1826 was a year of great misery for Dublin weavers. Wages which had until that year been maintained at the highest English rate now sunk to the level of the lowest rate paid in England. Trade began to revive after an interval of two years, but it never regained its former volume.

Owing to the recent introduction of steamship communication between Dublin and Liverpool the Dublin manufacturers had to bear the

full brunt of English competition. Only the strongest of them were able to hold out. As a slight compensation the Dublin manufacturers were able to send their cloth to the southern counties of England at a cheaper rate than the Yorkshire clothiers could. In the Second Report from the Irish Railway Commissioners, published in 1838, we learn that the fine cloths of Dublin were beginning to find a market in the South of England. The woollen trade of Ireland was stated to be, though diminished in volume, in a healthier state than "when existing under the paralysing influence of protecting duties." On the subject of protecting duties the denunciation of Mr. Otway has already been quoted.

In the report of that gentleman on the Hand-loom weavers, published in 1840, we learn that the manufacture of woollen cloth was then confined to the city of Dublin and its vicinity. A Dublin manufacturer named Willans gave evidence as to the extent of the trade. He gave it as his opinion that the estimate made by Mr. Haughton in 1822 for the Revenue Commissioners was too high by one-fourth. The trade had fallen off by one half since that time. In the year 1838 only 36 billies were employed. The number in 1822 was stated to be 92. The

value of the manufactured article he estimated at from £90,000 to £100,000. Mr. Otway reported that there were only 250 woollen weavers employed in Dublin and its vicinity in the year 1838. Even this small number were kept idle for three months in the year. Their average earnings during the previous three years, making allowance for idle time, fines and deductions were stated to be from 8s. to 10s. a week. When employed they could earn from 15s. to 18s. a week on each loom. The constantly recurring periods of unemployment acted most injuriously on the woollen weavers. The following quotation is taken from Mr. Otway's Report: "It was stated in evidence that the woollen weavers, earning from 10s. to 15s. a week, are worse off than other weavers earning only 7s. or 8s. a week, from their bad management, improvidence and intemperance; that if they were kept working the whole year round except one week, they would be starving that week." The idea of an "Eight Hours Day" seems to have been undreamt of in those days. To earn 15s. to 18s. a week on a loom it would have been necessary to work about fourteen hours a day.

Mr. Otway told us that the woollen industry had nearly expired before the protecting duties

were withdrawn in 1823. In 1838 he says "it is only now beginning to revive and advance towards a healthy condition." Unfortunately he seems to have been deceived in his opinion of the condition of the industry. The Dublin manufacturers were unable to withstand the competition of the Yorkshire manufacturers, with all their advantages of great capitals, cheap fuel, localised industry and division of labour carried to the highest degree. The introduction of the power loom in England rang the death knell of the Dublin hand-loom weaver. The trade in Dublin languished and died a lingering death in the nineteenth century.

It is gratifying to record that in the early years of the present century an attempt was made to revive this ancient Dublin industry. In 1904 a factory was opened in Weavers' Square, so long associated with the industry. Business throve there so well that the accommodation proved inadequate. An extensive plot of ground was acquired at the Harold's Cross end of Cork Street, whither the business was removed. The enterprise of the promoters, the City Woollen Mill Company, has been already rewarded. The factory, which is conducted on most up-to-date lines, power looms being employed, is in a prosperous

condition. The directors are in the happy position of finding a difficulty in coping with the orders which keep coming in. Its further development will be anxiously watched by Dublin citizens.

The Silk Industry.

[In the original essay there appeared a sketch of the silk industry in Dublin. This has now been omitted, as that industry is dealt with in greater detail in the succeeding paper.]

III.

THE COTTON INDUSTRY.

In Warburton, Whitelaw and Walsh's "History of Dublin," we read that in the year 1718 a petition was presented by two brothers named Sherston to the Trustees of the Linen Board which had lately been established, praying for some encouragement for the carrying on of cotton manufacture in Dublin. Nothing seems to have come of this petition.

In 1760 we find that there were two cotton manufacturers in Dublin employing 600 looms. Their machinery was rude and imperfect, spinning being performed on a common worsted wheel, which spun only one thread at a

time. Cotton yarn of an inferior quality was obtained by them from Manchester.

About the year 1779 the manufacture of corduroys was first introduced in Dublin.

Up to this time the Irish cotton trade had been carried on under difficulties. By a seventeenth century Act of the British Parliament, the direct importation into Ireland of cotton from the colonies was prohibited. It could only be brought into Ireland *via* Great Britain. The cost of the raw material was thus considerably increased. By an English Act, 7 Geo. I., penalties were imposed on the wearing in England of cotton garments which were not of English manufacture. Thus the English market was cut off from Irish manufactures; exportation to the colonies had already been prohibited.

At the end of the year 1779 the British Parliament, compelled by force of circumstances, removed the various restrictions which had hitherto crippled Irish trade. Ireland was now allowed to trade directly with the colonies. An era of enterprise set in in Dublin. A gentleman named Robert Brooke, who had lately returned to Ireland with a large fortune gained in the East, took advantage of the newly declared freedom of commerce and invested a

large sum of money in the cotton industry. Through his exertions, we are told, he "suddenly raised an obscure and scanty trade into a great national manufacture."

English artisans were invited to Dublin to instruct the people in the best method of manufacture. The most improved machinery was introduced into a large factory established in the Liberties. To complete the process of manufacture, Mr. Brooke erected a dryhouse and finishing factory in Cork Street. This gentleman was a man of very enlightened views, and far in advance of his age in his idea of the conditions under which manufacturing enterprise should be carried on. In a word, he was a pioneer of what is now known as the "Garden City" movement. In order to avoid carrying on the cotton manufacture in a confined, unhealthy place like the Liberties, where living was so expensive, he decided to build a new town, nineteen miles away in the county of Kildare. Factories were erected there to carry on all the processes of manufacture, including the printing of cotton and linen goods. He called his new town by the auspicious name of "Prosperous."

Led by Mr. Brooke's example, other men were induced to follow in his footsteps. A

Mr. Jackson established a factory in Cork Street. Others were set up outside of Dublin at Malahide and Balbriggan. Up-to-date machinery was imported from England.

The Irish Parliament was at last free to do something to promote Irish enterprise. A grant of £25,000 was made to Mr. Brooke, who had expended his whole private fortune in the cotton industry. £5,000 each were granted to Mr. Jackson, who had established a factory in Cork Street, and to Baron Hamilton, who had opened another at Balbriggan. The Trustees of the Linen Board and the Dublin Society granted machinery to manufacturers and offered bounties on manufactured goods. A Cotton Hall was opened in which cotton-factors were accommodated with chambers for the deposit and sale of their goods.

Owing to their inexperience and too great ardour these three gentlemen speculated overmuch. In 1786 Mr. Brooke failed and 1,400 looms were thereby thrown idle. Mr. Jackson was, however, able to hold out in Cork Street. Other factories were established in Dublin in Francis Street, Roper's Rest, and at Harold's Cross, all of which prospered.

The number of manufactories established in the Liberties gave rise to serious objection not

only on account of the workers engaged therein, but also on account of the community. We are told that a spirit of combination and riot existed. The large number of men connected by their own regulations, constantly associating in large numbers, and roused to sudden irritation by every temporary fluctuation in employment, were a constant menace to the public peace. To break up these combinations it was proposed to establish factories in different parts of the country. For this purpose Parliament granted £96,000. Many of the best "artists" and the chief leaders of the men were thereby drawn from Dublin. About this time there were 1,600 cotton weavers in the city and Liberties.

In common with other branches of the weaving industry, the cotton manufacture experienced a decline in the beginning of the new century. The reason assigned were the want of a resident Legislature to protect it, and the existence of the great Napoleonic war, which excluded the cotton manufactures from the continent of Europe, while at the same time an embargo was laid on the American ports. In consequence the Irish market were inundated with English cotton.

In 1816 only 300 looms were engaged in the

cotton industry in Dublin. Of these only 100 were in the hands of master manufacturers. The others, strange to say, were worked by cotton weavers who had joined together and started manufacturing on their own account, thereby cutting out the middleman's profits. Thus we see that the principle of co-operation was not unknown in Dublin even one hundred years ago, at a time when some of the Rochdale Pioneers were yet unborn. It is interesting to record that these men were enabled to start on their own account through the instrumentality of an institution known as the "Meath Loan." A certain capital was set aside by a member of that well-known family for the purpose of lending small sums to industrious artisans in order to enable them to tide over periods of unemployment, or to start work on their own account. This association of cotton weavers established a depot for their manufactures and had a regular market in the Liberties for their sale. About 200 working manufacturers were engaged in the industry.

In a Parliamentary Report on the State of the poor in Ireland, published in 1830, we find that there was at least one cotton factory in Dublin which employed a considerable number of hands. It was carried on by a Mr. Henry, who gave employment to 400 persons. This

manufacturer was carrying on the industry under disadvantageous conditions as compared with his British rivals. His yearly consumption of coal amounted to about 3,000 tons, which cost him £2,500 more than the same amount would have cost in Glasgow or Leeds. Not alone was it necessary to be at the expense of importing coal from the British coal-fields, but a tax had to be paid on its entry into the port of Dublin.

In 1838 we find that the cotton industry had practically left Dublin and was almost confined to the county of Antrim. Belfast became the great centre, much capital and skill being localised there. The advantageous position of Belfast near the cotton weaving districts of Scotland and the North of England contributed to the prosperity of the trade in the northern capital.

The Census Returns of 1841 show that the trade was still carried on to a small extent in Dublin. The existence of free trade between Great Britain and Ireland, the localisation of the industry in the Lancashire district, the increased use of machinery there, and the large capitals employed in the industry, combined with the high price of fuel in Dublin, led however, to the gradual extinction of the cotton industry in Dublin.

IV.

THE LINEN INDUSTRY.

The linen industry is of great antiquity in Ireland. Many references to it are to be found in the laws of the Irish Parliament. In the reign of Henry VIII., it was enumerated as one of the principal branches of Irish manufacture. The linen trade continued for a long time to be a purely domestic one. Wentworth, who is sometimes wrongly credited as being the founder of the Irish linen industry, did much to develop it during his Vice-Royalty of Ireland by importing the best varieties of flaxseed and by bringing over from Holland skilled artisans to instruct the Irish people in improved methods of manufacture.

When the woollen trade was crushed at the end of the seventeenth century, Irish brains and Irish labour were directed to a considerable degree to the development of the linen industry, for which object encouragement was promised by the English King and Parliament. At that time the industry only just sufficed for domestic requirements. In 1700, according to Hely Hutchinson, the export only amounted to £14,112.

At that time the English ports in Asia, Africa and America were shut against Irish linens. In 1705 Ireland was allowed to export white and brown linens to these places. As, however, Ireland was not allowed to import directly from the plantations the concession was of little value. She therefore continued to export most of her linens to England.

The Duke of Ormonde, twice Lord Lieutenant of Ireland under Queen Anne, did his best to encourage the linen industry. He established a factory at Chapelizod, where he built tenements for his work-people. In this factory 300 persons found employment. A larger factory was established by the same nobleman at Carrick-on-Suir.

The Irish Parliament, in pursuance of the policy directed from England, took measures to encourage the linen industry in order to counterbalance the loss incurred in the woollen trade. In 1710 an Act was passed granting certain duties and appointing Trustees for their disposal and management. The Trustees were composed of persons from each of the four provinces selected by the Duke of Ormonde, the Lord Lieutenant. Regular meetings of Trustees were held and journals of the proceedings kept. The efforts of the

Trustees resulted in "giving to the linen and hempen manufacture a consistency and regularity which were not known before." A room in Cork Hill was first occupied by the Trustees. As their business increased, the need for larger premises was felt. A grant of money having been obtained from the Irish Parliament, a magnificent building known as the "Linen Weavers' Hall," was erected near Bolton Street, and opened in the year 1728. In the Hall was a Board Room, where the Trustees met. The Linen Board regulated the concerns of the linen trade in every part of Ireland. The Hall was only a local establishment, and had no jurisdiction or control beyond Dublin. Chambers were provided free in the Hall for the reception of linen goods. Each person could sell his own linen or employ a factor to sell for him. Wholesale transactions only were allowed. The sales took place daily. A Yarn Hall was added later for the reception and sale of linen yarn. The Trustees also erected a warehouse in Poolbeg Street for the reception of imported hemp and flaxseed.

The Trustees of the Linen Hall were indefatigable in their efforts to promote the linen industry. In order to establish the cambric manufacture, an expert from Holland was

brought to Dublin to teach the art. In 1730 a cambric press was procured from Amsterdam and erected in the Hall.

The Trustees also encouraged the printing of linens in Ireland. Buildings and machinery were erected at Ball's Bridge about 1727. In order to secure a market for the finished article the Trustees petitioned the Legislature for permission to export Irish printed linens to the colonies. The boon was refused. The business of printed linens unfortunately soon became extinct. The prints and processes were then transferred to cotton fabrics.

In 1743 premiums were given on the exportation of English and Irish linens from Great Britain. This was a slight but tardy act of encouragement on the part of England who had solemnly bound herself to encourage the Irish linen industry. Yet until 1779 she refused permission for the exportation from Ireland to the colonies of chequered, striped, printed, painted, stained or dyed linens.

The Irish sail cloth industry which was connected with the linen industry, the sail cloth being made of a mixture of flax and hemp, was discouraged by England. The Irish Parliament which had granted a bounty in 1739 on the exportation of sail cloth had its object

defeated by the English Parliament, which imposed a duty on its importation into England equal to the bounty. The result was that the bounty had to be dropped in 1751.

Wonderful progress was made in the Irish linen industry throughout the eighteenth century. Much of the prosperity was due to the encouragement received from the Irish Parliament. From 1770 to 1775 the enormous sum of £823,486 was spent in promoting the industry. The export of Irish linens increased from three-quarters of a million yards in 1710 to over 35 million yards in 1800. In 1825 the export had reached 55 million yards.

Extraordinary as was the growth of the linen industry, Dublin does not seem to have shared in it to any great extent. It seems to have been more of a mart for linen than a seat of its manufacture. A good deal of the export trade was carried on through Dublin. Newenham mentions that Dublin exported 12,923,678 yards during the year ended 5th January, 1808. Warburton, Whitelaw and Walsh give the average value of linens entered at the Linen Hall for the five years 1812-1816 as one million sterling. Yet according to the same authority there was no linen manufacture carried on in Dublin, and no bleach green in its vicinity in 1816.

In the Hand-loom Weavers' Report of 1840 we find that the linen manufacture was being carried on in Dublin, though in a restricted degree. There was a factory at Chapelizod owned by Messrs. Crosthwaite, probably the same one that had been established by the Duke of Ormonde over a hundred years previously. In this factory 138 looms were then employed. There was also a sail cloth manufactory on a small scale at Glasnevin. Thirteen looms were regularly employed there.

At the present time Dublin is possessed of one linen factory, that of the Greenmount Spinning Company at Harold's Cross. It dates its origin from about forty years ago. This factory was founded and is still controlled by members of the Pim family, a family which has been so long and so honourably connected with Dublin industry. About four hundred persons find employment there.

It seems extraordinary that the linen industry should have practically disappeared in Dublin and its neighbourhood and throughout the south of Ireland, while at the same time it was making such gigantic strides in the north of Ireland. Sir Robert Kane in his book "The Industrial Resources of Ireland," attributed the growth of the linen industry in the north of Ireland

not to physical, but to moral causes. In the north the population consisted of a class devoted to industrial pursuits, eager for the independence and power which money confers. In the south the wretched remnants of feudal barbarism paralysed all tendency to improve. The lord was above industry, the slave below it.

We cannot take leave of the Dublin weavers without mentioning that besides adding to the wealth of the city they added considerably to its "life." In an interesting book called "Ireland Sixty Years Ago," published in 1847 by the Right Honourable J. E. Walsh, Master of the Rolls, we find some interesting details about them. The learned judge relates that a long feud had existed between the weavers and the butchers of Ormond Market, popularly known as the "Ormond Boys." Several fierce fights took place between the hostile parties. They generally occurred along the quays, and sometimes lasted a whole day long. A thousand men might be engaged in the frays. Bridges would be taken and recaptured. Ormond and Essex Bridges were the scenes of many fierce fights. In their quarrels the combatants used descend to great brutalities. They introduced the custom of houghing each other. On one occasion the weavers hung some of the

"Ormond Boys" from the hooks in their own market. The Trinity students used sometimes take part in these quarrels, generally siding with the butchers. One day terror spread through the college when word was brought that some of the students had been hung up in the Ormond Market. On rushing to their aid it was found that the students had been indeed "hung up," but only by the waistbands.

V.

THE SHIPBUILDING INDUSTRY.

The history of the shipbuilding industry in Dublin is a short and tragic one. The early years of the nineteenth century found it already well established in Dublin, on a similar scale to that in Belfast. It had every prospect of growing to be a great industry. The commerce of the port of Dublin was rapidly increasing. The opening of a system of free trade between Ireland and Great Britain led to a great increase in the shipping employed between Dublin and English ports. Yet in spite of its advantages the industry was ruthlessly crushed out of existence by the very men who would have gained by its prosperity and whose livelihood depended upon its existence. The Dublin

ship carpenters, by their unfortunate combination, succeeded in driving the industry completely from Dublin. Dublin's loss was Belfast's gain.

Never did a closer corporation exist among workmen than that of the Dublin ship carpenters. Selfishness pushed to extreme limits was their principle of association. Every trade that hopes to live must allow for a certain regular accession of new members. The Dublin ship carpenters seem to have lost sight of that fact, for they restricted the admission of apprentices to their trade to ridiculously low limits. They succeeded in keeping down the number employed in the trade and keeping up the rate of wages to a very high level until the time came when there were no more wages to receive.

The evidence given before the Select Committee on Combinations in 1838, throws light upon the condition of the industry. One gentleman, a Mr. Morton, stated that he had started business in Dublin in the year 1812. There were then four other shipbuilders in Dublin employing about 300 hands. Mr. Morton found that he could provide employment for 100 more. In that very year the ship carpenters went on strike for the purpose of

regulating the number of apprentices in the trade. They succeeded in restricting the number allowed to each of the older firms to eight apprentices. Mr. Morton, who had only recently started, was allowed but three. The following year they struck against Mr. Morton because he had taken an apprentice against their will. In 1814 they struck work again because they had some grievance against his foreman. In 1825 there was a general strike. The number of apprentices allowed to each employer was now reduced to three. Then an appalling thing happened. A young apprentice of Mr. Morton was murdered at breakfast time one day that year. Disgusted with the conduct of his men, and finding his trade bad in consequence of their action, he gave up his yard and retired from business.

The men succeeded in their immediate object of maintaining wages at a high level. The rate paid in Dublin was from 4s. 6d. to 5s. per day, at that time considered very good wages. In Glasgow, at the same time, men at similar work received only 3s. 6d. per day, while apprentices received 8s. per week. The same rate of wages had to be paid in Dublin to all the men, whether good or bad workmen. Mr. Morton paid his men 27s. per week. Some

of them he considered not worth 2s. per day. Others he would have paid 2s. per day to keep away. If a man asked for employment and it was refused, all his men might throw down their tools and walk away.

Small wonder is it then that an industry conducted under such conditions did not thrive. Ship owners ceased to employ Dublin shipbuilders. They would not allow ships to be repaired in Dublin that could be repaired elsewhere. Sometimes vessels were patched up in Dublin and then brought elsewhere for final repair. A curious accident happened with regard to a vessel belonging to the City of Dublin Company. It had been injured on a voyage, and was sent to a Dublin ship-yard to be patched up in order to allow it to proceed across to Great Britain for thorough repair. On the way over the vessel sank and was lost.

It was estimated that nearly a million sterling had been sent from Dublin to have vessels built during the ten years 1828–1838. Most of the steam vessels that plied between Dublin and other ports in the Channel belonged to Dublin, yet not a single one was built in Dublin. The last steamer built at this period in Dublin was constructed by Mr. Morton.

In 1838 there were four shipbuilders in

Dublin. They did not construct vessels of any magnitude. Their chief employment consisted in building sloops, boats, and fishing smacks, and in doing necessary repair work. The ship building industry was gradually leaving Dublin and going to Drogheda and other ports. Soon it was extinct.

The removal of the shipbuilding industry from Dublin meant a loss not alone of the wages paid to the ship carpenters, but also of the wages paid to sawyers, blacksmiths, ropemakers, sailmakers, and others who carried on subsidiary trades.

For several decades the shipbuilding industry remained a stranger to Dublin, from which city it had been so ruthlessly driven. The early years of the present century saw it return to the capital under happier auspices. Two enterprising Scotch gentlemen, who had gained considerable experience in British shipbuilding yards, determined to reintroduce the industry in Dublin. In 1902 they started business in a suitable position near the mouth of the Liffey. Thanks to the business acumen, knowledge, and enterprise of these gentlemen, Messrs. Scott and Smellie, the venture prospered. Orders for new vessels as well as for the repair of old ones came pouring in. Soon

the shipyard became the scene of a busy industry. The excellent quality of the work turned out won approval from all who favoured the firm with their orders. The enterprise was well supported by Dublin merchants and by various public bodies throughout the country. Dublin, Waterford, and Limerick Corporations sent orders for new dredgers. The *clientele* of the firm extended to England and Scotland. Such was the repute of the shipyard that the Canadian Government placed an order for two high-speed fishing cruisers and coast protection vessels. These vessels and others are at present in course of construction, and will doubtless lead to renewed orders.

In order to provide capital for the necessary extension of the business, the firm was turned into a limited liability company, the original partners becoming joint managing directors.

At the present time four hundred men are kept in constant employment. They include platers, rivetters, caulkers, drillers, engineers, blacksmiths, angle-iron smiths, boilermakers, shipwrights, joiners, painters, plumbers, riggers, and members of other trades. The iron workers are paid on the piece-work system, the other trades by time. The average earnings

are the same as on the Clyde and other shipbuilding centres.

The present condition of the industry is very satisfactory. The position of Dublin, situated as it is at the most important centre for cross-channel traffic, as well as for traffic up and down the channel, is favourable to a great development of the industry. If the Port and Docks Board continue to give facilities for its development, and Irish traders and companies give the needful support, there is no reason why the industry should not become a big one in Dublin.

VI.

THE COACHBUILDING INDUSTRY.

Eighteenth-century Dublin was remarkable for the magnificence of the carriages and other equipages used by the brilliant society which then frequented the capital. In those days there were no railway carriages nor tramcars. For long distances, substantially built coaches had to be used. For shorter ones, and especially for journeys in the city, elegant and artistic carriages and sedan chairs were used. Consequently the coach and carriage building industry was at its height. The Dublin coachbuilders prided themselves upon the

artistic quality and general excellence of their work. To this day the Dublin coachbuilders point to the Lord Mayor's state coach as an example of coachbuilding as an art industry.

According to a report prepared by the members of the coachbuilding trade, and submitted to the Committee on Irish Industries in 1885, we learn that before the Union Dublin contained over forty coach factories, giving employment to between 1,700 and 2,000 hands (not including car, gig, and chair makers). A list is given of thirty-eight master coach makers who carried on business in Dublin in 1799. There were also at that period several factories for the manufacture of mail and stage coaches.

From the Union trade began steadily to decline. About the year 1840 railways came into use, and operative coachmakers found ample employment in the manufacture of railway carriages, not only for Ireland, but for England, Germany, and other countries. After the introduction of railways a revolution took place in the style of carriages to suit the altered times. The light, handy brougham took the place of the cumbersome chariot, and for a short time trade revived. This period of prosperity was followed by the famine period, from the effects of which the trade never re-

covered. Still there were about twenty principal manufacturers of carriages in Dublin employing 700 to 800 hands, and had not the importation of carriages set in, the coachbuilding industry might have looked forward to a new era of prosperity.

In 1885 there were only about ten coach factories manufacturing gentlemen's carriages and employing 200 hands. There were also about 300 hands employed in making spring vans, cabs, cars, and in railway and tramway work. The report concluded by saying: "We attribute the decline of this trade to the following causes:—Absenteeism, importation, and the general depression of all the other industries of the country; but the principal cause of all is the importation of carriages by the nobility, who get their carriages, almost without exception, from England and the continent."

Since 1885 great changes have occurred in the coachbuilding trade. The great extension of the tramway system in Dublin, combined with the popularisation of the bicycle, have lessened the demand for the service of cabs and cars. The introduction of the motor car had a more serious effect. The motor is everywhere displacing the carriage. The increase in the

number of motors in use in Dublin is remarkable. Unfortunately for the coachbuilders, the great majority of motor cars are imported from abroad. The Dublin master coachbuilders are, however, beginning to apply themselves to the task of body building while the chassis is imported. Increasing employment is, however, being given in the manufacture of tramcars and railway carriages. The Irish railway companies have begun to recognise their duty to the country, and are getting as much as possible of their stock made in Ireland. A good deal of this work is done in Dublin. On the whole, it must be admitted that although the coachbuilding industry has been considerably dislocated, and some men may have been unable to find employment, yet a greater number of men are now engaged in making cars and carriages of various kinds, including railway and tramway work, while a new industry—that of bicycle making—has been introduced in the city. Comparing the number that find employment now, and the number engaged in 1841, we find that, according to the 1841 census there were 598 coach and car makers, while according to the census of 1911 there were 956 engaged as coachmakers, motor car bodymakers, wheelwrights,

and bicycle makers and dealers. This number would seem to be exclusive of those engaged in railway work.

VII.

THE LEATHER INDUSTRY.

The use of skins and hides for articles of dress and other purposes is almost as old as the human race. In all probability the first inhabitants of this country were acquainted with their use. For our purpose it is sufficient to know that the leather industry was already a great one at the opening of the eighteenth century.

We learn from the Calendar of the Ancient Records of Dublin that, in 1666, amongst the guilds which petitioned for representation on the City Assembly was that of the curriers. The request was granted, and the guild of the curriers was allowed to send two of its members to share in the councils of the City Fathers.

Reference to an old Dublin Almanac of 1735 reveals the great importance of the leather industry in Dublin. Among the twenty four guilds which at that time had representation in the Common Council of the city no less than five were concerned with the working up of skins and hides. These five guilds were those of the Tanners, the Curriers, the Glovers, the

Shoemakers, and the Saddlers. Hence the members of these allied trades had considerable influence in managing the affairs of the city.

It was probably at the instance of the members of these guilds that the tolls were removed in 1763 from raw hides going to the Liberties to be tanned and then returned to the city. On that occasion the raw hides were mentioned as a staple commodity.

In a paper submitted by Dr. Lyons to the Committee on Irish Industries in 1885, he says that leather manufactures had reached great excellence in Ireland and continued to flourish for a considerable period after the Union. "The national wish for hunting sports largely encouraged this branch of trade." He mentions that sixty leather breeches makers walked in the procession in honour of George IV. on his arrival in this country in 1821.

Details regarding various branches of the leather industry are given in the Report of the Committee on the Condition of the Poor in Ireland, published in 1836. From the particulars mentioned it would appear that the trade had declined much since the beginning of the century, and that in consequence the rates of wages were adversely affected.

The decline in the currying industry, which

formerly gave employment to 150 individuals, was attributed to the general poverty of the country (half of the country people going barefooted), the withdrawal of the protecting duties and the great importation of leather from England. Dealers who used to come to Dublin from the country four times a year and purchase each time as much as £2,000 worth of goods, now came but twice, and did not lay out a fourth part of that amount. Only about sixty curriers found employment in Dublin in 1834. Their earnings were 5s. per week less than they had been ten years previously. A master currier and tanner, in his evidence, stated:—"I remember the time when you could not get a house in Back Lane (which is entirely appropriated to tanners and curriers) and now every third house is unoccupied."

In 1834 there were sixty master tanners in Dublin, employing from 300 to 350 journeymen. During the Napoleonic war a good demand for leather existed: large quantities were consumed in the manufacture of harness and saddlery for the troops abroad. Since the war wages had declined.

Glovemaking was at one time an important branch of this industry. It was stated in evidence by operatives in the trade that in 1816

fifteen* hundred men, women and children were employed in the business, forty-five of them as glove cutters. Trade was brisk, and there was regular work until 1823. In that year the protecting duty was removed. English goods now began pouring in and underselling the Irish article. In 1834 there were only 200 hands employed, of whom thirty were men. Employment was irregular.

The number of saddlers had likewise decreased. The saddlery trade was stated to have been affected as much as, or more than any other by absenteeism. In 1814 there were 200 persons employed. In 1824 only 150 found employment. This number was further reduced to 110 in the year 1834.

The manufacture of boots and shoes, in common with other branches of the industry, was in an unsatisfactory state. According to the evidence of operatives in the trade, there were 1,500 journeymen shoemakers in Dublin, while proper employment did not exist for more than 700 of them. Their wages had likewise suffered a decline.

The Census Returns of 1841 show that a

* This number seems to be overstated. In reply to queries submitted to the trade it was stated that, in 1814, 380 to 390 persons were employed. In 1834 this number had fallen to 110 or 120.

considerable number of people found employment in Dublin in the various branches of the leather industry. According to that census there were then in Dublin 83 skinners, 319 tanners, 143 curriers, 59 leather dressers, 101 brogue makers, 248 saddlers and 5,650 boot and shoemakers—a grand total of 6,603. (There is a large and unaccountable discrepancy between the number of boot and shoemakers and that already quoted.)

In the evidence given by Mr. Parkinson, who had been Secretary to the Dublin Exhibition of 1861, before the Irish Industries Commission in 1885, he states that there had been a rapid decline in the tanning industry during the last few years. The English tanning process then occupied only four months, whereas the Irish process (the method of tanning by bark being chiefly used) occupied no less than twelve months. Consequently the English tanners could undersell the home manufacturer.

The same Commission received an interesting letter from Mr. James Winstanley relative to the boot and shoe industry. The head of this well-known Dublin firm stated that the boot and shoe industry was carried on on two systems—(1) the hand sewn system,

and (2) machine-sewn—the "Bench" system. The hand-sewn system had been gradually giving way to the other. The "Bench" system was established in Dublin in 1860, and had since made great progress. It gave employment to between 500 and 600 hands. Altogether the Irish factories employed about 1,000 hands. They only supplied about 25 per cent. of the ready-made boots and shoes sold in this country. Seventy-five per cent. of the ready-made goods were imported. The export of ready-made boots was almost nil. Under the old hand-sewn system, the export of boots and shoes was a staple business of Dublin, a very large trade being done with the young colonies, which now manufacture their own, and in most cases prohibit import by heavy duties. Mr. Winstanley stated that the then existing state of the trade was due to price, not to quality. The low-priced article sold, although it was dear to the purchaser at any price. The whole country was flooded with rubbish. Irish traders would import British-made goods for the sake of an extra penny, twopence, or threepence a pair. British manufacturers allowed extravagant discounts and long credit. They sold at prices barely sufficient to cover the cost of production. These

factors ruined the market for the honest serviceable article. He also complained that through railway rates allowed goods to be imported and delivered at places in Ireland at less cost than similar goods could be sent from Dublin.

According to the 1901 census there were then in Dublin 37 curriers and tanners, 56 leather dressers, 331 saddlers, and 1,348 boot and shoe makers and dealers—a grand total of 1,772 employed in the industry as compared with 6,603 in 1841.

VIII.

THE BREWING INDUSTRY.

The brewing industry has had a long connection with the city of Dublin. The industry seems to have been carried on quite extensively in the seventeenth century. Sir William Petty, in his "Political Anatomy of Ireland," expresses surprise at the extent of the liquor traffic in Dublin in the year 1672. He says there were less than 5,000 houses in the City and Liberties of Dublin, and of these there were no fewer than 1,180 ale-houses and 91 public brew-houses.

In 1696 the brewers' guild petitioned for representation on the Common Council of the

city, and were allowed a representation of two members.

In Dobbs' "Essay upon the Trade of Ireland," dealing with the period 1719–1727, he mentions that no ale or beer appeared in the list of imports. There was, however, an average annual importation of barley and malt to the value of £7,255, and of hops to the value of £40,681. From this it would appear that the Irish brewers were at that time able to maintain control over the home market.

In 1732 England established a monopoly for her hops by enacting that hops were to be imported into Ireland only from Great Britain.

At this time there was no porter manufactured in Dublin. The malt drink brewed and used in Dublin was a kind of brown ale. An importation of porter from London gradually set in, to the loss of the Dublin brewers. This importation of London porter, combined with the increased use of spirituous liquors, led to a reduction in the number of Dublin's breweries. Within the period 1762–1773 there was a decrease in the revenue raised from beer and ale of no less than £51,463 10s. 6d. per annum, owing to the gradual decay of the trade. In the same period the quantity of porter imported increased from 28,935 barrels to 58,675 barrels.

In 1773 the Irish House of Commons appointed a Committee to take into consideration the Petition of the Master, Wardens and Brethren of the Corporation of Brewers. The Report from this Committee furnishes some valuable information respecting the Dublin brewing industry.

The most important witness examined by this Committee was Mr. George Thwaites, Master of the Corporation of Brewers, Dublin. This gentleman stated that he had been thirty-four years a brewer in Dublin. When he commenced, the trade was a most lucrative one. He remembered a time when there were seventy breweries in Dublin. The number had since decreased to thirty. He believed that the brewers were doing badly, and that many of them would leave the trade if they could sell their breweries and plant at the original cost. He believed that one-fourth of the brewers had failed within the previous ten years owing to the increased price of malt, hops, fire, and labour of all kinds, while the brewer was unable to raise the price of liquor in the same proportion; to save himself he was obliged to lessen the quantity of malt and hops. The liquor manufactured was therefore less agreeable and less nourishing. People had also

taken to the excessive use of spirituous liquors. If the brewers raised the price of their ale, the publicans would sell nothing but porter, and consequently the Dublin brewing trade would be ruined. The publicans had a greater profit from the sale of porter than from the sale of ale. The brewers only received 18s. for every barrel of ale of forty gallons, and out of that sum they paid 5s. 6d. duty to the Crown. The English porter brewers increased their importation into Ireland from 47,735 barrels in 1772 to 58,675 barrels in 1773. Mr. Thwaites said that if something were not done to encourage the brewing trade in Ireland it would be ruined on account of the increased importation of foreign malt liquors.

Mr. Thwaites informed the Committee that when the English brewer shipped his porter to Ireland he drew back 8s. English, the whole amount of the duties paid there on malt and hops and for Inland Excise. When malt was 24s. a quarter or under he received a bounty of one shilling English a barrel on his malt liquor. On importation into Ireland he paid something less than fifteen pence Irish a barrel, deducting from which the said bounty of one shilling English, the remainder was about twopence per barrel, which was the whole of what im-

ported porter paid in England and Ireland, while the Irish brewer paid nearly 5s. 6d. a barrel, a difference under which no trade could subsist. The consequence was that the English brewer could afford to sell his porter cheaper here than in England, or than the Irish brewer could possibly brew it. The result was that the London brewers had engrossed the trade of Dublin, and could lower prices as they pleased.

Mr. Andrews, who carried on a brewery on an extensive scale, informed the Committee that he would have set up a brewery in Holyhead for the supply of Dublin on account of the great advantage the English brewer had over the Irish, only he thought that the existing laws would surely be changed owing to their severity.

The evidence of Mr. Arthur Guinness should be of considerable interest at the present day. He said that he also had intended to start brewing at Carnarvon or Holyhead if he could get a brewery ready built there. He actually went over to Wales in search of a brewery. At that very time he was prepared to settle in Wales and build a brewery if he could be assured that the laws would stand as they were for seven years.

It was a fortunate thing for Dublin that Mr.

Guinness could not find a suitable brewery in Wales, and that he decided to continue his brewing in Dublin.

Hely Hutchinson, in his "Commercial Restraints of Ireland," written in 1779, says: "Beer they export to us in such quantities as almost to ruin our brewery; but they prevent our exportation to them by duties laid on the import there, equal to a prohibition."

If the Dublin brewers found their trade being ruined by the importation of London porter, the natural thing for them to do was to attempt its manufacture themselves. Perhaps they were deterred by the idea which had gained currency that the Thames water was specially suited for its manufacture. However, about 1778 the Dublin brewers adopted the natural remedy for their distress, and the first porter brewery was established in the city.

The new venture succeeded so well that the importation of English porter fell off. In the early years of the nineteenth century the importation had entirely ceased.

In 1811 a Parliamentary Committee made a Report upon a Petition received from the brewers of Dublin, Cork, and Waterford. That Committee reported that the excessive use of spirituous liquors had of late much in-

creased in Ireland. This increase was stated to be due to the low price of spirits. Clandestine distillation of spirits was also found to prevail extensively. Details supported by affidavits were submitted to the Committee concerning the annual sales of malt liquor of nine of the principal breweries in Dublin for the years ending 25th March 1810 and 25th March 1811. The sales for the former year were stated to be 280,860 barrels of forty gallons each. In 1811 the sales had diminished to 214,777 barrels. The sales of the Guinness firm were 70,614 barrels and 55,488 barrels in the years 1810 and 1811 respectively.

In Warburton, Whitelaw and Walsh's "History of Dublin," we find that in the year 1816 there were thirty-five breweries at work in Dublin. Ten thousand barrels of corn were malted for brewing each month. The average amount of porter brewed during the previous five years was estimated at 300,000 barrels. Of this amount 269,000 barrels were consumed in Dublin, 30,000 barrels were sent to other parts of Ireland and 1,000 barrels were exported. This is the first record we have of an export trade in this important commodity. In the Second Report from the Railway Commissioners, Ireland, 1838, it is stated that great

breweries had been established in Dublin and Cork. Irish porter was then largely exported to England. We are told that "Dublin bottled porter successfully rivals the London porter, even in London itself."

The brewing industry was one of those few Dublin industries which profited by the opening of free trade between Great Britain and Ireland and the greatly increased communication that arose between the two countries after 1824. Since that time the history of the Dublin brewing industry has been one of continued success. Many of the smaller breweries have disappeared or been merged in large ones. That process is a familiar feature of the modern industrial world. Dublin porter, especially that of the well-known firm of A. Guinness, Son & Company, is world renowned for its excellence. It is shipped to all parts of the world at the present day. Dublin can now boast of a brewery with the largest output in the world. Guinness's Brewery covers an area of over fifty acres. In 1906 the firm paid duty on over two million barrels. The duty amounted to nearly one million pounds. Since that time the million pounds mark has been exceeded. The firm gives employment to over 3,000 individuals. The export of porter from

Dublin in the year 1908 amounted to 594,546 hogsheads valued at £1,902,547.

IX.

THE DISTILLING INDUSTRY.

In that very interesting book, Morewood's "History of Inebriating Liquors," written by an Irishman, and published in Dublin early in the nineteenth century, we find an account of the various inebriating liquors used by every race and in every clime. Morewood considered that the art of distillation was known in Ireland long before it became general in Europe. He attributes the origin of the art to eastern sources, whence it passed *via* Italy or Spain to Ireland. At the time of the Norman invasion the Irish people were in the habit of indulging in a spirituous liquor known as "uisge beatha" the water of life. The Irish word has come down in the modern form of "usquebaugh." The term is synonymous with the Latin *aqua vitae*, French *eau de vie*. It is generally admitted by etymologists that the modern word "whiskey" is derived from the Irish "uisge."

The knowledge of the art of distillation seems

to have been universal in Ireland. If one may judge by the number of distilleries that have been established at one time or another in the cities and towns of Ireland, and the number of illicit stills that have been discovered, there seems to be scarcely a hill or a valley in this island to which the knowledge of the art has not penetrated. No restriction, according to Morewood, seems to have been placed upon the distillation of spirits in Ireland until the reign of Henry VIII., when it was enacted, "that there be but one maker of *aqua vitae* in every borough town upon pain of 6s. 8d." At a parliament held in Drogheda in 1556 it was enacted that no *aqua vitae* should be made without first obtaining a licence from the Lord Deputy under the Great Seal under penalty of a fine and imprisonment. Exceptions were made in favour of noblemen, gentlemen, and freemen of towns corporate. In this Act *aqua vitae* was spoken of as "a drink, nothing profitable to be daily drunken and used, now universally made throughout this realm, especially in the borders of the Irishry, whereby much corn, grain, and other things are consumed."

The distillation of spirits was free from tax until the reign of Charles II. In 1662 a duty

of fourpence was imposed upon every gallon of *aqua vitae* distilled in the kingdom. The tax remained at fourpence per gallon until 1715, when it was increased to seven pence. At the end of the eighteenth century it had reached by progressive stages the sum of 2s. 4¼d. a gallon.

At what period the distillation of spirits was introduced into Dublin it is difficult to say. One would be inclined to set it down at a very early date, seeing that the knowledge and practice of the art of distillation was acknowledged by Parliament to be universal in the country. There is no evidence, however, that a guild of distillers ever existed in Dublin. It may have been that the brewers and distillers were confounded together, for we learn on trustworthy authority that the distillers had the privilege of brewing on their premises small beer or ale for sale until the year 1778, when the privilege was withdrawn.

Warburton, Whitelaw and Walsh in their "History of Dublin," mention that whiskey was first introduced in Dublin about 1750, and that previous to its introduction the ardent spirits used in Dublin were rum and brandy. It seems hard to believe that distillation of some kind was not carried on in Dublin anterior to this

period, especially as the practice of distillation was general in the country. It may be that owing to the clerical nature of their calling these gentlemen were not so well acquainted with the particulars of the distilling industry as they were with other branches of industry. One very old Dublin distillery, until lately belonging to the firm of Geo. Roe & Co., Ltd., dates back to 1757. In that year a Mr. Peter Roe purchased a small distillery, which existed on the site of the present one.

Four Dublin distilleries date their origin from the eighteenth century. The Thomas Street distillery, so long associated with the Roe family, holds the palm for antiquity. Next in point of age comes the Marrowbone Lane distillery, which was purchased in 1779 by some members of the Jameson family. Power's distillery in John's Lane was founded in 1791 by an ancestor of the present proprietors.

In their early days these Dublin firms had to struggle along under difficulties. An enormous amount of illicit distillation took place all over the country, while Dublin firms working at the very seat of the Government were under the necessity of paying duty to a considerable amount. Competition with the produce of

illicit stills must have tended to considerably restrict the output of Dublin firms. In the three years 1811, 1812 and 1813 over nineteen thousand illicit distilleries were destroyed by the revenue and military forces. In 1811 it was stated in the House of Commons by the Finance Minister that while six million gallons of spirits had been charged with duty, it was certain that eight million gallons had gone into consumption without payment.

Morewood gives a list of the number of stills in Dublin and their contents for the nine years 1798–1806. The list is as follows :—

Year	No. of Stills	Contents gallons
1798	44	39,523
1799	37	34,372
1800	32	29,154
1801	32	29,136
1802	31	33,911
1803	32	29,797
1804	28	24,446
1805	26	22,323
1806	15	11,871

A great decrease both in the number and

contents of the Dublin stills took place during this period. The decrease was probably due to increased taxation. The duty of 1s. 11d. per gallon in 1798 had risen to 4s. 1d. in 1804. It would be wrong to infer that every gallon of Dublin-made whiskey paid duty. The revenue authorities were continually changing the system of taxation, as it was found that the ingenuity of the Irish distillers was more than sufficient to defeat the object of the Legislature.

The use of spirituous liquors in Dublin seems to have been on the increase in the early years of the nineteenth century. In 1811 we find the Dublin brewers in a petition to the Legislature complaining of the decrease in their sales owing to the increased use of spirituous liquors. In 1810 the price of spirits was stated to be only 7s. 6d. a gallon.

In the history of Dublin previously referred to, we find that in the year 1816 there were nine distilleries at work in Dublin. In these 18,000 barrels of malt were used per month (in the spring and winter months, when the distilleries were at work). In the year 1816, 1,969,726 gallons of spirits were distilled in Dublin, of which 1,553,741 gallons were consumed in the city. 126,595 gallons were exported to such places as London, Liverpool,

Whitehaven, Lisbon, St. John's, Newfoundland, Quebec, Nova Scotia, New York, and the Barbadoes. The foreign demand for Dublin-made whiskey is thus of long standing.

From the beginning of the nineteenth century the Irish whiskey trade began to assume a degree of importance which it had not previously possessed. The trade began gradually to pass into the hands of a few individuals of large capital. This was particularly the case in Dublin, where the trade has always been limited to a very few firms.

Since the Union the exportation of whiskey has largely increased. The whole exportation of whiskey for twenty years previous to the Union did not amount to 80,000 gallons. In 1802 the exportation of whiskey exceeded 200,000 gallons. In 1803 it exceeded one million gallons. During the period 1801–1820 the average annual exportation was nearly half a million gallons. In this trade Dublin shared to a considerable extent.

In a Report on the state of the poor in Ireland, published in 1830, we learn that the Dublin distilleries were then far from prosperous, one of the reasons assigned being that the Dublin distillers had to pay about four times as much for their coal as their Scotch rivals paid.

Until 1858 the Irish distilleries had an advantage over the English distilleries in the amount of duty paid. In that year the duty was made uniform in the United Kingdom.

The distilling industry is one of those few Dublin industries which have been able to hold their own against foreign competition. This success is due to the fact that the Dublin firms have long held the reputation of using only the best materials for distilling. They have always shown themselves ready to adopt the latest improvements in the industry. Another probable reason is that the industry, although an old established one, is still carried on under comparatively simple conditions. There has been no necessity to introduce that extraordinarily complex machinery which characterises modern industry. It is through the unwillingness or inability of some Dublin manufacturers to introduce the latest and best styles of machinery that many Dublin industries have been compelled to yield to the stress of outside competition.

In 1886 and 1887 a Mr. Alfred Barnard made a tour of the distilleries of the United Kingdom and published a book embodying the details of his tour. From this publication we learn that in 1887 there were over 1,100 persons

employed in six Dublin distilleries. The total annual output of these distilleries was stated to be well over five million gallons.

The Dublin distilleries have suffered considerably by the great increase in the whiskey tax in 1910. A duty of 14s. 9d. a gallon is a very heavy imposition under which to labour. The exportation of whiskey from Dublin has fallen off very much within recent years. In 1901 there were 4,245 butts and puncheons, 15,079 hogsheads, 2,325 casks, and 8,692 quarter casks of whiskey exported. According to the Port and Docks Board returns the exportation of whiskey in 1910 was over one-eighth less than in 1909. In 1911 the exportation had fallen to 2,482 butts and puncheons, 6,400 hogsheads, 770 casks, and 2,995 quarter casks. Besides a diminished export, the Dublin distillers have to struggle against diminished home consumption. In 1852 duty was paid on over eight million gallons of whiskey for home consumption. In 1909 duty was only paid on 3,563,074 gallons for home consumption. The decrease is accounted for by the great reduction in the population and the spread of temperance. On the whole, the present outlook for the Dublin distillers is not a particularly rosy one.

X.

TWO MODERN INDUSTRIES.

It is pleasant to record that the nineteenth century, which has been characterised by the decay of so many Dublin industries, has witnessed the origin and development of two new industries, which at this day are possessed of great vitality and seem likely to have a long and prosperous career. The industries alluded to are biscuit-making and mineral water manufacture. These two industries have had a wonderful development within the past half century. Their present position in the forefront of like enterprises in the modern industrial world is due to the excellent quality of the goods themselves, and to the enterprising spirit of the manufacturers.

The manufacture of biscuits, for which the firm of W. & R. Jacob & Co., Ltd., are now world-renowned, had its origin in Waterford, from which town it has passed to Dublin. The success which has rewarded the enterprise and energy of this firm is a sufficient answer to those who say that the industrial spirit is dead in the Irish race. The firm gives employment to about 3,000 persons. Jacob & Co.'s biscuits are now exported to all parts of the world. The export of biscuits from Dublin in 1908

amounted to £328,009. In 1909 it amounted to £334,300. In 1910 £407,000 worth of biscuits were exported. The present state of prosperity of this firm may be easily judged from these figures.

Dublin, which has gained such a name for the excellence of its inebriating liquors has also excelled in the manufacture of drinks eagerly welcomed by the temperance advocate. Its mineral waters are renowned, and can be purchased in all quarters of the globe. The pioneer firm in this modern industry is the well-known firm of A. & R. Thwaites & Co., Ltd. It is their proud boast to have invented soda water. Another firm whose products are sent far and near is that of Cantrell & Cochrane. This firm has shown remarkable enterprise in building up their present large business. The excellence of their mineral waters, some of which they have patented, combined with their persistent advertising, has led to their success. This industry gives employment to about 1,000 persons.

XI.

ECONOMIC DISTRIBUTION OF THE POPULATION.

This account of industry and employment in Dublin may be fittingly brought to a close

by a survey of the present economic distribution of the population of the city. According to the 1911 census Dublin had a population in that year of 304,802 persons, which represents an increase of 14,164 persons during the previous decennial period. The inhabitants of the city are divided by the Census Commissioners into the following six classes:—

—	No. of Persons	Males	Females
I. Professional Class ...	18,438	13,950	4,488
II. Domestic Class ...	18,232	2,636	15,595
III. Commercial Class ...	22,945	20,910	2,035
IV. Agricultural Class ...	2,276	2,152	124
V. Industrial Class ...	73,175	54,579	18,596
VI. Indefinite and Non-Productive Class ...	169,736	53,429	116,307
Total	304,802	147,656	157,146

The foregoing table is a very interesting and instructive one. One of the first points that strikes us is that the female element in the population predominates to the extent of nearly 10,000 persons. May not this explain to some extent the reason why female labour is so badly paid in Dublin? Then we are amazed at the large number belonging to the indefinite and non-productive class—namely, 169,736, or considerably more than half the population.

Only 135,066 persons are returned as following any definite occupation. The great majority in the sixth class would, of course, be composed of women and children. The number of children attending school has been estimated at 46,936. Workhouses, hospitals, asylums, military barracks, and other institutions account for 18,629 persons.

The number of individuals allotted to each class calls for some criticism. Of the five occupied classes, the industrial class is by far the largest, numbering 73,175, while the commercial class contains less than one-third this number—namely, 22,945. These figures seem at variance with the generally accepted idea as to Dublin's economic position. If true, they would cause Dublin to be regarded as a great industrial centre, and would lessen in importance its aspect as a commercial and distributing centre. On turning to the detailed analysis in the census returns we discover how these figures have been arrived at. All persons working and *dealing* in various commodities, such as books, machines, carriages, ships, tobacco, food, textiles, dress, and others, are assigned to the industrial class. This, it is submitted, is a false classification. The allocation to the industrial class of all persons working in certain com-

modities may well be justified. But the allocation to the same class of all persons *dealing* in those commodities cannot be equally justified. They would fall more naturally into the commercial class. Persons engaged in the distribution and transit of goods should certainly be assigned to this class. Yet we find in the census returns the following curious items:—3,158 general shopkeepers and dealers, 2,014 grocers, and tea, coffee, and chocolate makers and dealers, 750 engaged in supplying board and lodgings, together with such groups as milk-sellers, butchers, poulterers, fishmongers, green-grocers, and others—all under the heading of industrial class! No wonder that the total is high when it is made up in this manner. Thus it is clear that in the census returns the industrial class is disproportionately large, increased as it is at the expense of the commercial class.

The building trade accounts for 9,156 skilled artisans, together with an unnamed proportion of the general labourers, who amount to the enormous number of 17,269 individuals.

The other classes do not call for much remark. The professional class, which numbers 18,438 individuals, includes, besides those engaged in occupations generally known as

"professional," those engaged in the general or local government service and in the defence of the country. The domestic class accounts for 18,232 individuals. For a city of Dublin's size and economic condition, this number is far too high.

Another fact which springs to light from an examination of the census returns is the extraordinarily large number of those who might be classed under the heading of "unskilled labour." In the commercial class we find 4,604 males set down as messengers, porters, and watchmen, exclusive of those in the Government and railway service, and 3,081 males engaged as carmen, carriers, carters, and draymen. In the industrial class there are 975 coalheavers, 328 road labourers, 233 railway labourers and navvies, 408 costermongers, hucksters, and street sellers, 19 scavengers and crossing-sweepers, and 17,269 general labourers. If we add the 18,232 persons engaged in domestic offices or services who are for the most part unskilled we get a grand total of 45,149 persons in the unskilled labour class. As only 135,066 individuals are returned as having any definite occupation, we find that one-third of the working population is unskilled. The unduly large amount of unskilled labour in Dublin

explains the extraordinary prevalence of poverty in the city. Certainly the economic condition of the metropolis is not a sound one.

At the present time Dublin possesses several brewing concerns, one of which is the greatest in the world. A number of distilleries are engaged in distilling that "uisge beatha" for for which Ireland has been so long famous. Temperance reformers are pleased to note that the metropolis is gaining a name for its mineral waters. In the edible line Dublin has one of the largest biscuit making factories, while its flour, bacon, and preserves are all of excellent quality. Lovers of the fragrant weed can enjoy a smoke from Kapp & Peterson's patent pipes, lit by Paterson's matches. The weaving industry, for which Dublin was at one time famous, is still carried on in poplin factories, in a woollen and a linen factory. Its shipbuilding yard seems likely to achieve the success which at one time was promised this industry in the early nineteenth century. The manufacture of boots and shoes gives employment to a large number of persons. Coach, car, and bicycle making also yield employment to a large number. The iron foundry and patent manure industry have also attained a degree of importance. In addition there

are several minor industries carried on in the city. There is every prospect of considerable expansion in these industries in the bright future which seems dawning for Ireland, and especially for its capital.

THE SILK INDUSTRY IN DUBLIN

THE SILK INDUSTRY IN DUBLIN

In order to obtain a wider knowledge and a clearer view of the history of any city or country, it has now come to be recognised that the student of history must devote at least as much attention to the study of social and economic conditions as he has hitherto done to the study of those events to which the name political is generally assigned. The historian of to-day is no longer content with a recital of the changes of dynasties and of governments, of victories achieved and disasters sustained, and of the parts played by great men in the political sphere: he rather makes the people his chief study. An inquiry into their social condition at various periods, their manners and habits, the industries at which they gained a livelihood, and the changes affecting those industries, is his particular concern. Many histories of Dublin have been written from time to time, but the social and economic history of Ireland's capital

has yet to be written. The present writer has selected an industry for which Dublin was at one time famous, in the hope that an account of its history may throw some little light on the economic condition of Dublin in the past. In the following pages an attempt is made to describe the origin, growth, and vicissitudes of the silk industry, at one time the staple industry of the metropolis.

Not of Native Growth.

The silk industry is not of native growth, but was transplanted here by immigrants from France. The history of the industry brings us back to the closing years of the seventeenth century, a century characterised particularly by religious intolerance. Freedom of belief was then unknown. Protestant persecuted Catholic and Catholic Protestant. The most Christian King of France, Louis the Fourteenth, "le Grand Monarque," was no exception. The Huguenots of France were persecuted with a cruelty which baffles description. Conversion to the religion of their sovereign, or extermination as a sect were the alternatives before them. Many chose to leave the country that gave them birth and seek a

shelter in alien lands. To the Netherlands they flocked, to Germany, England, and Ireland, bringing with them that innate skill which was the product of generations of industry, and whatever money and goods they could manage to smuggle out in their secret departure.

Huguenot Settlement.

Many of these Huguenot families found their way to Ireland, a country where religious intolerance was also rampant, but here it was the Catholic population which was oppressed by a Protestant government. The Huguenots settled in different parts of Ireland, but the greater number came to Dublin, where they were eagerly welcomed by the ruling class.

Efforts were made by the immigrants to establish one or more branches of the silk industry in different parts of Ireland, but in no place did the industry take root outside of Dublin. In this essay, therefore, "Dublin silk industry" and "Irish silk industry" are used as interchangeable terms.

The municipal records of Dublin show that in 1681 the Common Council of the city authorised collections to be made in the city and Liberties for the benefit of French Pro-

testant refugees in Dublin, in order to enable them to set up in their respective trades and callings. It was further ordered "that all such of the said persecuted Protestants as shall within five years from the date hereof make their application for their freedoms here, and are artisans and handicraftsmen, shall be admitted to the freedom of this city without fines or fees, and also, for the space of five years to come from the date hereof, shall be freed of all city taxes." As a consequence of this Order we find that there were several French Protestants admitted to the franchise of the city in January, 1682. Amongst the names of those admitted occurs that of Abraham Tripier, "silk weaver." As far as can be ascertained this is the earliest record of the presence of silk weavers in Dublin. The Order conferring the freedom of the city upon French Protestants was renewed in 1686, the year subsequent to the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which event led to increased emigration from France, and was again renewed in 1693. On both these occasions it was further ordered that they should be admitted free of the city guilds without payment of fine. Amongst the names of those admitted in 1693 occur those of Peter Soit and James Soit, "silkweavers."

Thus it was that the silk industry was introduced into Dublin. The silk weavers who were numbered amongst the immigrants banded themselves together and, thanks to their sterling character and industry and to the encouragement they received from the citizens, they were soon enabled to carry on their industry in peace and prosperity.

The Huguenots have left their mark upon Dublin in many ways. They infused new life and vigour into many of the industries they found in existence there; they introduced a wholly new industry, the silk manufacture, which was destined to give employment to thousands in the city; many of them rose to the highest eminence in the commercial life of Dublin. Notable amongst others was the La Touche family, which at one time carried on a great banking establishment in Dublin, and is to this day prominently connected with one of our biggest manufacturing concerns. Architecturally they gave to the Liberties of Dublin that foreign air which characterises the district. To the Huguenots is attributed the building of those peculiar gable-fronted houses which are grouped here and there in the older parts of Dublin. To this day they are known as "Huguenot houses." These houses were con-

structed with lofty attics in order to accommodate the looms of the weavers, for weaving was then, and continued for a long time to be, carried on in the weaver's own home.

Records of the Irish Parliament.

The records of the Irish Parliament throw much light on the state of the silk industry at various periods during the eighteenth century. As early as 1707 a petition was presented to the House of Commons by Robert Normond and others, manufacturers of silk and mohair, complaining that their manufacture of silk, mohair and horsehair buttons had been injured "by means and practice of those who of late make horn, wood and cloth buttons," and requesting a prohibition of the latter manufacture.

If the use of silk for the making of buttons was affected by the employment of substitutes, as the petitioners averred, certain it is that the industry as a whole had not suffered; it rather seems to have made wonderful strides. The Dublin manufacturers were soon enabled to supply more than half the home demand. In Arthur Dobbs' "Essay upon the Trade of Ireland," published about 1720, he tells us that the amount of manufactured silk imported

during the period 1720 to 1727 averaged £37,955 per annum, while raw silk to the value of £21,084 and thrown undyed silk to the value of £17,613 were imported yearly. Thus raw material to the value of £38,697 per annum was worked up into the finished product during this period—a wonderful testimony to the energy and enterprise of the Huguenots in Dublin. That Dobbs considered that the industry might have been in an even stronger position is evidenced by his patriotic remark: "I am persuaded our Irish ladies would appear with more lustre in their native charms, when clad in Irish silks, in the eyes of their admirers, than in the richest brocades of foreign nations."

As to the number of persons employed in the industry at this time we have no definite information. It must have been fairly considerable, however. From evidence submitted to the Irish House of Commons it appears that there were eight hundred looms employed in the year 1730 in the making of garment silks. Each loom gave employment to several individuals. The average number to each loom seems to have been four. Thus over 3,000 would have been employed in the making of garment silks. The silk manufacturers of Dublin had not, however, confined them-

selves to the use of silk alone. They had already exercised their ingenuity in combining silk with other materials, such as cotton and worsted wool, the combination of silk with the latter of these two articles giving the material known as "tabinet" or "poplin." The number employed in the making of these mixed goods is not stated. That these materials were then in use seems evident from the words of a Petition addressed to the House of Commons in 1733 by the merchants, traders and weavers dealing in silk, silk and thread, silk and cotton, silk and worsted, and worsted manufactures, complaining of the practice of smuggling East India manufactures into Ireland. The House in response to the Petition ordered that leave be given to bring in the Heads of a Bill for prohibiting the use and wear of silks and mixed silk goods, the manufacture of Persia, China, or East India.

Protective System.

The reference to the practice of smuggling in this Petition reminds us that the protective system was then in vogue in Ireland. Indeed, protection was practically universal throughout Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth

centuries. The government of each country endeavoured to promote native industry by prohibiting the importation of competing wares, or at least by imposing a heavy tariff thereon. As early as 1661 an excise duty and a duty called "subsidy of poundage" had been imposed on manufactured silks brought into Ireland. These duties were, however, levied for revenue purposes. The values of the goods according to which the duties were calculated were set forth in a "Book of Rates." Silks from foreign parts had to pay one-third more than silks imported from England and Wales. To protect the young industry we find the Irish Parliament, in the year 1705, imposing an additional duty of one shilling and sixpence per yard on silks and stuffs made or manufactured in Persia, China, or the East Indies, and imported into Ireland. This duty was continued by Acts passed each session down to 1792. The Irish manufacturers were, however, feeling the stress of competition on the part of manufacturers nearer home than China or Persia. Accordingly, in 1729, in addition to the existing duties, an extra tax of half-a-crown per pound weight was imposed on all manufactures made of or mixed with silk, except the manu-

factures of Great Britain, China, Persia, or the East Indies.

The duties thus imposed were not, however, sufficient to give the Dublin silk manufacturers complete control of the home market. In 1745 a Petition was presented by the Master, Wardens, and Brethren of the Corporation of Weavers and others, importers and dealers in silk, against the importation of French and other foreign manufactures, and praying for relief. The House, having referred the Petition to a Committee, on their recommendation resolved that an additional duty of forty shillings per pound weight be imposed upon all velvets and manufactures made of or mixed with silk, except the manufactures of Great Britain, Persia, or the East Indies.

This Petition is interesting in two ways. First, it was aimed chiefly at preventing the importation of French silks, for the French were then the strongest rivals of the Dublin silk weavers. It was their competition that finally ruined the silk trade of the city. Secondly, the Petition is interesting as being the first presented by the silk trade as an organised body. It was a Petition of the Master, Wardens, and Brethren of the Corporation of Weavers. This Corporation

which would seem to have consisted of weavers of all descriptions, silk, linen, and woollen weavers, regulated the affairs of the trade, and jealously guarded its privileges. In accordance with the laws of the time, it was composed exclusively of Protestants. The Corporation or Guild had a representation of three members on the Common Council of the city.

The Act of 1745, imposing the heavy duty of forty shillings per pound weight on French and other foreign silk goods, with the exceptions specified above, did not suffice to protect the home manufacturers from the effect of foreign competition. Means were found to evade the Act. The smuggling of silks increased at a rapid pace. A more insidious way, however, of damaging the home market was introduced. In the legislation of the Irish Parliament dealing with the importation of silk and other wares Great Britain was specially favoured. Silks from Great Britain were admitted at a much lower rate than silks the manufacture of other countries. As Ireland imported most of her commodities *via* Great Britain, French silks were constantly packed with British silks or brought into Ireland as British silks, the protective duty imposed on

French goods being thereby evaded. In consequence of this harmful practice, the Master, Wardens, and Brethren of the Corporation of Weavers besought Parliament to impose an absolute prohibition thereon. As a long struggle between Great Britain and France had been just brought to a conclusion the Irish Parliament may have considered it inadvisable to prohibit absolutely the importation of French goods. They contented themselves with increasing the additional duty which had been imposed by the Act of 1745 from 40s. to £4 per pound weight. This extra duty was imposed on all velvets and silks manufactured elsewhere than in Great Britain, China, Persia, or the East Indies. This Act failed to strike at the root of the real grievance of the Dublin silk manufacturers, which was the clandestine importation of French silks and the passing off of French silks as British.

The Irish Parliament, which at this time was manifesting a keen interest in native industries, and was enabled owing to the better condition of the country's finances to spend more money on the encouragement of industries, considered that something should be done to arrest the decline which had set in in the silk industry. The manufacture had fallen rather

low. The number of looms employed in the making of garment silks had been greatly diminished. Eight hundred looms had been employed in the year 1730. In 1763 only fifty were so employed. Numbers of silk weavers were idle in the streets. Many families were reduced to poverty, even to beggary. To stimulate the silk manufacture and other industries, the Irish Legislature in 1763 granted a sum of £8,000 to the Dublin Society to be used by them in the encouragement of industries. In the Act directing the allocation of this sum, the silk industry was placed first on the list of those which Parliament considered should be encouraged. From this date, in the grants made by the Irish Parliament to the Dublin Society, the industry was specially marked out as deserving of its support.

Encouragement by the Dublin Society.

This famous Society had been founded in the early part of the eighteenth century for the encouragement of agriculture and industries generally. To promote the silk industry, the Society established in 1764 a Silk Warehouse in Parliament Street, in order to provide the

silk manufacturers with a mart for the disposal of their goods. A premium, amounting at first to ten per cent., was offered to the manufacturers on all Irish manufactured silks sold in the Warehouse. In consequence of the encouragement thus given, considerable improvements were stated to have been made in the quality of Irish wrought silks, silk manufacturers branched out extensively in the trade, and numbers of persons who before were idle found employment.

The Silk Warehouse was placed under the superintendence of twelve noblemen and a committee of twelve persons annually chosen by the Corporation of Weavers to examine the quality of the goods sent in by the manufacturers. A number of "lady patronesses" were also selected by the Dublin Society, with a view to encouraging the industry, and advising the silk manufacturers with regard to any change in the manufacture necessary to adapt it to the changing fashions. The establishment of the Silk Warehouse gave a much needed fillip to the industry. According to the evidence of William Sinnott, Master of the Corporation of Weavers, given before a Committee of the Irish House of Commons in 1784, the years succeeding that which witnessed the opening

of the Warehouse in Parliament Street were the most prosperous period of the Dublin silk trade. He stated that it was generally considered that in consequence of the encouragement thus given, fifteen hundred looms were employed in the manufacture of garment and lining silks alone, independently of those engaged in the ribband branch. It was stated in a Petition of the year 1786 that under the auspices of the Dublin Society "the manufacture revived, improved, and extended insomuch that in prosperous years near three thousand looms, beside seventy-nine engines (including the narrow or ribband branch), were employed, yielding a comfortable subsistence at these periods to upwards of 11,000 persons." The Petition also stated that the home market would yield employment to nearly 20,000 persons.

Eleven thousand persons engaged in the silk industry in Dublin! The number makes one pause in astonishment. And this industry was the growth of but a couple of generations. What a hum of industry there must have been then in the Liberties of Dublin! Those were the days when the Coombe, Pimlico, Spitalfields, Weavers' Square, and the surrounding districts were at the height of their prosperity.

The weavers were then a powerful body, and added considerably to the life of the city. Like the weavers of Bruges and Ghent and other great weaving centres, the weavers of Dublin had their feuds with members of other trades. In Dublin eternal enmity was sworn between the weavers and the butchers, known in those days as the "Ormond boys," from the situation of their market on Ormond Quay. Many a battle royal between the rival trades took place along the quays and across the bridges connecting the southern part of the city with Ormond Quay, the headquarters of the butchers. Those days are gone by. The hum of the loom is rare music in the district that once throbbed with its sound. The Liberties seem plunged in irrevocable decay. The few remaining weavers are, happily for themselves, a law-abiding and order-loving body. But we must on with our story and trace the changes that caused this once great industry, the one-time staple trade of the city, to sink into comparative insignificance in the Dublin of to-day.

Dublin in the Eighteenth Century.

Before doing so it might be as well to say a few words about the class upon which the silk

trade depended for its existence. In the eighteenth century Dublin was regarded as the second city of the Empire. The society that adorned it was second to none in Europe. In magnificence, in wealth, in outward show it was unrivalled. This society was composed almost exclusively of the land-owning class. Those of them who chose to make Ireland their home had their headquarters in Dublin. In the capital the life of this class was a constant round of dances, balls, dinners, suppers, concerts, and other social entertainments. The members of it vied with one another in the richness of their dress, the magnificence of their equipages, the display in their houses. All this tended to foster an industry which catered solely for a luxurious class. The silks, brocades, velvets, poplins, ribbands, &c., which were used for personal attire, the tapestries, hangings, carpets, rugs which adorned their houses and carriages, proceeded in great part from the Dublin looms.

Extent of Industry, 1774–1783.

The prosperity which succeeded the opening of the Silk Warehouse was but short-lived. The industry had reached its acme, and soon

began to decline. Foreign competition was as usual the cause. Still the industry was of a considerable extent, as may be seen from the following figures which give the amount of raw silk imported into Ireland for the ten years 1774–1783:—

An Account of Raw and Thrown Silk Imported during the Years 1774–1783.

Year	Raw	Thrown	
		Dyed	Undyed
	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.
1774	38,811	97	36,759
1775	29,578	73	52,516
1776	41,594	174	40,807
1777	54,043	161	52,706
1778	51,873	292	46,487
1779	29,633	306	21,986
1780	28,557	201	41,652
1781	68,609	410	76,521
1782	50,696	119	61,276
1783	33,782	288	52,092

From this table it may be seen that an average of 91,209 lbs. of raw material was consumed annually by the silk manufacturers. Of the silk imported nearly half came in the raw state and was thrown by the Dublin throwsters.

Against this table may be set another, showing the importations of foreign manufactured silks. This table gives some idea of the competition which the home manufacturers had to meet, while at the same time it shows the extent to which the industry might have been developed had the home market been completely secured.

Importation of Wrought Silk and Silk Mixed during the period 1774–1783.

Year	Wrought Silk lbs.	Wrought Silk Value	Silk Mixed Value
1774	14,665	£43,995	£21,611
1775	13,658	40,976	24,234
1776	17,326	51,978	30,371
1777	24,187	72,561	45,411
1778	27,223	81,671	52,765
1779	15,794	47,382	30,818
1780	10,655	31,966	17,498
1781	22,471	67,413	79,422
1782	25,658	76,974	105,626
1783	19,749	59,247	129,170

Under the heading "silk mixed" in above table are comprised articles composed of silk and cotton, silk and inkle, silk and worsted.

From the table it may be seen that the importation of goods made of or mixed with silk during this ten-year period amounted to £1,111,089. Thus Dublin lost over a million pounds during ten years, or an average of £111,109 per year, a great portion of which would have been spent in wages in the silk, woollen and cotton trades.

Lord Sheffield in his "Essay upon the Trade of Ireland," published in 1785, speaks of the excellence of the Irish silk manufactures. In that essay he refers to the increasing imports of manufactured silks. Lord Sheffield informs us that an export trade in ribbands and manufactured silks began to spring up about 1781. He states that no exportations of silk appear in the Custom House books previous to that year.

The Spitalfields Act.

In the Session of Parliament of 1779-1780 an Act was passed which, in subsequent years, met with condemnation, and which, in the opinion of some people contributed to the downfall of the trade. This was an "Act for the Better Regulation of the Silk Manufacture," 19 & 20 Geo. III., c. 24, by which it was enacted that from 1st August 1780 the wages

and prices for work of journeymen silk weavers, within the city of Dublin and the adjacent Liberties for the distance of two miles and a half round from the Castle of Dublin, were to be regulated, settled and declared by the Dublin Society, upon application being made to them for that purpose. Penalties were imposed upon masters offering or journeymen weavers taking either more or less wages than those fixed by the Dublin Society. In addition, the Dublin Society were given complete powers of superintendence over the silk manufacture. They were empowered to make any orders, regulations or bye-laws dealing with the industry that they thought fit, such to be binding upon all persons concerned in the manufacture.

This Act gave the power of fixing wages to a body of men who, however intelligent and well intentioned, could not be so well acquainted with the difficulties and changing conditions of the trade as those who were actively engaged therein. It took from masters and workmen the power of freely bargaining as to the rate of wages, a power which is essential in a trade subject to such fluctuations as the silk trade was. The result was that the rates of wages and prices of work were fixed and unalterable. Changes

in the rates of payment only took place on occasions of extraordinary alterations in the trade. The consequence was that the trade was greatly hampered and suffered from the effects of the "Spitalfields Act," so-called in imitation of a similar Act obtaining in Spitalfields, London.

Committee of Inquiry, 1784

Shortly after the Irish Parliament started on its independent career, that body decided to hold an inquiry into the state of industries generally in Ireland. A committee was appointed, which sat to receive evidence in 1784. Amongst other industries the silk trade was passed in review. According to the evidence of William Sinnott, the Master of the Corporation of Weavers, a decline had set in some years before. The industry had so decayed that in 1784 fully half the looms in Dublin were unemployed. This decay he attributed to the importation of manufactured silks. A careful survey had been made of the number of looms employed and unemployed. According to a return submitted on oath by the working silk weavers, there were 748 looms employed in the manufacture of broad silks,

whilst 780 looms were idle. On an average of four persons to each loom there would have been 3,120 persons idle in that branch. A return was also submitted by those engaged in the ribband manufacture. In that branch of the trade there were 686 looms and 28 engines employed, whilst 485 looms and 51 engines were idle. Altogether there were 5,366 persons idle. In prosperous years it was stated that 11,270 persons found employment in the industry.

Closing of the Silk Warehouse.

Two years later the Silk Warehouse in Parliament Street was closed by an Act of the Irish Legislature. The Act recited that the establishment of the Warehouse by the Dublin Society had not answered the ends of a general increase and extension of the manufacture. Accordingly it was declared that no part of the funds of the Society after 25th March 1786 be applied to or expended in support of any house or warehouse for selling by wholesale or retail any silk manufacture whatever. The Act directed, however, that the money might still be spent in the encouragement of the industry, but in some more beneficial manner

The closing of the Warehouse was protested against by the Dublin silk manufacturers, but without avail. During the period from 1765 to 1781 the Dublin Society had spent over £28,000 in the encouragement of the industry. The Society spent more on the silk industry during this period than it did on any other object. It came to the help of the industry in 1764, when it was in a low state. Under the auspices of the Dublin Society the silk manufacture reached its highest point of prosperity and gave a large amount of employment. It may be argued that the premiums offered by the Dublin Society on sales in the Warehouse tempted the manufacturers to over production. But at the time when production was highest, a large amount of foreign silks was imported and found a ready sale in the market. The Irish manufacturers had all along to maintain a keen struggle against competition. They imported their raw materials through Great Britain, and the extra cost of carriage handicapped them in competition with the English manufacturers. On the Continent the Italian and French manufacturers had the raw materials ready to hand, while the cost of labour was comparatively low. The silks of Bengal, China and Persia were manufactured at a cost which

was trifling compared with the cost of manufacture in Dublin. Again, the home manufacturers had to contend against a perverted taste for foreign goods. The work of the Dublin Society in directing public attention to the native industry, and in stimulating it as much as possible is therefore deserving of the highest praise.

Branches of the Industry.

The silk industry in this century had branched out in many directions. The variety of silk fabrics made in Dublin was very large. From a Petition of 1793 we learn that two years previously there had been 1,200 looms at work on the following fabrics:—Velvets, modes, satins, mantuas, sarsenets, florentines, florinets, armazeens, tabbareas, whole and half tabinets (poplins), peelings, persians, handkerchiefs, and others. Unfortunately the manufacture of many of them has been long lost to the city, while others have but lately disappeared.

The Union.

Fluctuations in the industry continued until the end of the century. The insurrection of 1798 caused a disturbance to the silk manu-

facture as well as to the other city industries. Then came the Union. As might be expected that event was of extraordinary import to the silk trade. The abolition of the Irish Parliament and the transference of the seat of the legislature from Dublin to London had a disastrous effect upon the industries of the city in general, but particularly upon those industries which were dependent, mainly or in great part, upon the wealthy classes who had heretofore frequented the metropolis. London, in place of Dublin, became the social centre of Ireland. Thither flocked the nobility and gentry of Ireland. Many of them made England their permanent home. Others contented themselves with a short visit to Ireland for the hunting season. The brilliant life of the Irish metropolis was no more. Decadence set in and left its mark upon many parts of the city which were at one time the abode of the noble and wealthy. Dublin, of course, was not absolutely abandoned by the higher class. The Viceregal court still remained, but it was no longer attended as it had been in the eighteenth century. A new aristocracy took the place of that which had departed. It was not, however, a genuine one. Its members were less wealthy than those of the old class. They strove, in-

deed, to keep up to the old traditions of extravagant display, though with ill success. The new society embraced the professional class, the higher government officials and the wealthy commercial men of the city. On this class the silk industry now depended. The articles comprised in the Dublin silk manufacture were still articles of luxury. Silks, velvets, and poplins had not yet become common. Their price was beyond what the wife of the ordinary citizen could afford. Amongst the farming class in Ireland they were unknown. Hence the market for these goods was of a rather limited nature. A more serious aspect of the Union, however, was that the body which had heretofore protected and encouraged the industries of Ireland was no more. It had given place to a new Parliament in an alien country, a Parliament the majority of whose members knew little and cared less about the industries of Ireland. In yielding up its power the Irish Parliament had stipulated, amongst other things, that a duty of ten per cent. should be imposed on British silks entering Ireland, in order to give the Irish manufacturers a chance of holding their own in the competition with which they would in future have to contend. As the price for this privilege, Irish silk goods

were to be subject to a similar duty on entry into Great Britain.

The Jacquard Loom.

The year which witnessed the passing of the Act of Union was signalised by another event of far-reaching importance to the trade in general. In 1800 the Jacquard loom was invented by a Frenchman who gave his name to the product of his inventive genius. This loom caused a wonderful development in the silk trade. It enabled patterns of intricate design to be worked on silk fabrics, patterns which would have been extremely difficult or impossible to perform on the old plain loom. The patterns were worked out on cards affixed to the looms, which still continued to be worked by hand. Owing to the beauty and variety of the designs which were rendered possible by the Jacquard loom, the new invention gave a great stimulus to the trade. The importance of this new development in the silk trade can be at once appreciated when it is remembered that the chief consumers of silken fabrics were ladies, who are always anxious for something new. The Jacquard loom was only gradually introduced in the trade. It prob-

ably became common in England before it came into general use in Ireland. The plain loom is still used in both countries for weaving cloth of plain design.

Period 1801–1820.

The effect of the Union was not, of course, immediately felt by the silk trade. The city was not abandoned suddenly by the noble class who had made the social life of Dublin so brilliant and attractive. Gradually, however, it lost its hold upon that class, and to the present day has not regained it. The silk industry had been too firmly planted to fall into utter decay, even though it had lost a great number of its best customers. The following table, which has been extracted from a Parliamentary return of the year 1821, gives, perhaps, the best idea of the state of the industry during the first two decades succeeding the Union. It is an account of the raw and thrown silk exported from Great Britain to Ireland during the period 1801 to 1820. The raw material imported from that country was practically the whole of the raw material that came to Ireland. A small quantity may have been imported by vessels trading directly between

Ireland and continental countries. Owing to the existence of the Napoleonic wars the trade thus carried on was necessarily restricted.

An Account of Raw and Thrown Silk exported from Great Britain to Ireland during the period 1801–1820.*

Year	Raw lbs.	Thrown lbs.
1801	30,144	27,164
1802	28,577	36,033
1803	17,119	19,346
1804	40,503	73,959
1805	19,311	68,935
1806	14,424	52,081
1807	21,331	58,623
1808	32,602	21,805
1809	10,774	47,782
1810	22,943	48,061
1811	28,379	27,286
1812	37,122	80,778
1814	22,720	58,441
1815	18,866	51,658
1816	31,099	46,072
1817	19,337	19,704
1818	31,694	30,780
1819	30,663	49,441
1820	16,052	71,841

* There were no figures given for the year 1813.

The figures in the table give an average of 72,234 lbs. of raw and thrown silk consumed by the Irish silk manufacturers. Compared with the period 1774–1783, for which the figures have been already given, we find that a decrease had taken place in the amount of raw material consumed to the extent of 18,975 lbs. per annum, or a decrease of nearly twenty per cent. In addition, we notice a considerable change in the relative quantities of raw and thrown silk imported. Whereas in the period 1774–1783 raw and thrown silk were imported in nearly equal quantities, in the period 1801–1820 raw silk was only about one-third and thrown silk about two-thirds of the total quantity imported. The silk throwsters of Dublin lost a good deal of employment thereby. Still the table shows that the silk trade during this period was of a fairly substantial size, and would doubtless have continued so were it not for certain changes of far-reaching effect which were about to take place, and which will be referred to later.

The Napoleonic wars had an injurious effect upon the Dublin silk trade during this period. We learn from a report of the silk weavers, presented to a Parliamentary Committee in 1836, that the Dublin trade suffered in con-

sequence of the Berlin Decree and the Orders in Council. The supply of Italian raw silk was thereby cut off, and the price of raw material rose to five guineas per lb. Many weavers were thrown out of employment, some of whom enlisted in the army. Bonaparte's edict caused the English to erect machinery for throwing Indian silks, which the Dublin manufacturers could not afford to do. Consequently the English gained a great advantage over the home manufacturers. Trade extended in England. Owing to the higher wages obtaining in Macclesfield and Manchester, Dublin weavers were attracted to those centres. Notwithstanding the protecting duties, English manufacturers were, by their increased command of capital, able to undersell the Dublin manufacturers. In evidence submitted to the same Committee it is stated that there were 3,000 looms at work in Dublin in the year 1814.

Warburton, Whitelaw and Walsh, in their "History of Dublin," published in 1818, state that the general distress and failure of markets which followed upon the close of the great European war "completed the ruin of the silk manufacture in Dublin." Many workers were, they say, thrown out of employment and

left destitute. The statement as to the ruin of the silk manufacture is hardly borne out by the figures already quoted, although it must be admitted that the amount of raw material imported in 1817 was one of the lowest on record. They state, however, that the tabinet and poplin fabrics, for which Dublin had been long famous, were not so unfortunate. In 1815 64,000 yards of these fabrics had been exported to Great Britain, and 80,000 yards to the United States. (Tabinet and poplin are both cloths of the same weave, the former being a slightly heavier fabric than the latter.) The historians add that the Irish exporters were being undersold in America by exporters of light French and Italian silks.

Decline of Industry.

A tragic chapter in the history of the Dublin silk trade now opens. It deals with two events, one of which brought disaster and the other ruin upon the silk trade of the city. From the combined effects of these two events the trade never recovered. It was crushed in its most important branches—silk, velvet, and ribband weaving. The poplin branch alone survived, although in a very attenuated form. It is in

the decade extending from 1820 to 1830 that we must search for the causes which made Dublin lose its once magnificent trade.

The protecting duty of 10 per cent., which was imposed by the Act of Union on British manufactured silk goods entering Ireland was only granted for a period of twenty years from the 1st January 1801, the day on which the Union was to come into force. This duty afforded a considerable amount of protection to the Dublin silk trade and, as we have seen, enabled it to remain of fairly large dimensions. When the time for which the duty was granted was drawing to a close, and it became known that the British Government did not mean to continue it, a deputation from the silk and other trades of Dublin was sent to the Chancellor of the Irish Exchequer to protest against the repeal of the duties on silk and other articles. The deputation, according to Mr. Wadden, one of its members, explained that, in their opinion, as soon as the Union duties would be repealed, the silk manufacture in Dublin would be destroyed. The Chancellor replied in the following terms: "You are wrong; the repeal of those duties will be to you a source of very considerable employment, for while there is a duty of 10 per cent. on British manufactures

coming to Ireland, and a duty of 10 per cent. on your Irish poplins or tabinets going to England, so long will you be shut out from that market; but take away those duties, and for every ten weavers that you now employ in the production of Irish poplins or tabinets, you will, in my judgment, be enabled to give employment a hundred fold." The deputation failed in its object. The duties were repealed with the result that the silk manufacture in Dublin was almost annihilated. Many wealthy manufacturers were ruined; families were scattered; weavers were reduced to poverty and destitution. Mr. Wadden determined that he would not remain in Dublin to be destroyed. He transferred himself and his capital to Spitalfields and found that after-events justified his action. He left, he says, many manufacturers behind him who were worth at the time of his departure from £14,000 to £20,000. "Now" (in 1832) "they are gone, they have lost their property, and are not worth so many pence."

The result of the establishment of free trade between Great Britain and Ireland soon made itself felt. A commercial panic occurred in England in 1825. A slump occurred in prices. English manufacturers used every effort to rid themselves of goods which were a drug on the

market. Manufactured silk goods were dumped in Ireland at less than cost prices. Against such unfair competition the Dublin silk manufacturers were unable to hold out. Many ceased manufacturing for the time, others closed down their premises and retired from business. Ruin was the order of the day. A worse blow, however, was soon to follow.

Great Britain and Ireland were now an entity as far as the fiscal system was concerned. Consequently any change that was made in the system affected Ireland. For a considerable time past, ever since 1765, the importation of foreign manufactured silks into Great Britain had been prohibited. The Government of the day decided to abolish the prohibitory system and change to a protective one. Accordingly an Act was passed in 1824 admitting foreign manufactured silks into the United Kingdom subject to an *ad valorem* duty of 30 per cent. The Act was not to come into operation until 1826. At the same time the duties on raw and thrown silk were greatly reduced, that on the former being reduced in 1824 from 4s. per lb. on Indian silks, and 5s. 6d. per lb. on raw silks from other countries, to 3d. her lb., which duty was still further reduced to 1d. per lb. in 1826, whilst the duties on thrown silk were reduced

from £2 5s. 6d. per lb. on dyed silk and 14s. 8d. on undyed silk, to 6s. 8d. and 5s. respectively, at which rates they stood in 1826. Both Irish and English manufacturers protested against the admission of foreign manufactured silks, but in vain. In 1826 the ports were opened. French and Italian silks now began to flood both the English and Irish markets. The Dublin silk weavers made a last valiant effort to hold their own. In 1824 they had of their own accord made a slight reduction in their wages, in order to enable their masters to compete with the English manufacturers. In 1826 they flung off the shackles of the Dublin Society which had for years, to the disadvantage of the trade, fixed the rate of wages. The silk weavers at a public meeting in Dublin voluntarily reduced their rates of wages by 15 per cent. The reduction, however, came too late. No reduction of wages could enable them to withstand the competition to which they were now subjected. Ruin, hopeless ruin, stared them in the face. The English silk trade, which had hitherto been prosperous and strong, was brought to its knees by the competition it had to face; the Irish silk trade was killed.

A Select Committee was appointed in 1832 to take evidence as to the state of the silk trade

in the United Kingdom. Abundant evidence was brought forward, all tending to prove the facts mentioned above—namely, the decay of the English silk trade and the ruin of the Irish trade. With the English trade we are at present not concerned, except that its decay in the years succeeding 1826 tends to show that the disaster which overtook it, a prosperous trade, proved overwhelming to the Dublin silk trade, an already weakened one.

One of the witnesses examined by this Committee was Mr. Jonathan Sisson, a representative of the Corporation of Weavers on the Common Council of the City of Dublin. He stated that he had been engaged in the silk manufacture early in life. Subsequently he had become an importer of raw and organzine silk. He retired from business in 1826, because he found the silk trade rapidly declining in Dublin. Many persons were preparing to quit the business, as there was little or no profit to be realised. He himself had incurred considerable loss by the last importation of thrown silk which he had made. Questioned as to the reason why the importation of raw and thrown silk had become less profitable than formerly, and as to his own reason for leaving the trade, he answered: "The operation of two

measures, the first was the sudden and unexpected repeal of the Union protecting duties, and the second the admission of foreign silk into Great Britain and Ireland; the effect of the former was to inundate Ireland with the British fabric, and the effect of the latter with French fabrics; there was consequently little room left for the existence of either the importer or the manufacturer in Dublin, besides which, the British manufactures about this time were sent to Dublin in large quantities and sold by auction at destructive prices." The reason for the latter circumstance was, according to Mr. Sisson, the distress amongst the English silk manufacturers, who availed of the opportunity to get rid of heavy stocks. Another reason to which he ascribed his loss on importation was the sudden reduction of duties on thrown silk by Treasury Order in November 1825 from 7s. 6d. to 5s. per pound. Want of confidence was created when such important changes could be made without previous notice or without an Act of Parliament. The silk trade of Dublin still continued in a very depressed state (1832). Mr. Sisson went on to state—"The extent of the distress in 1826 it is almost impossible for me to enumerate; in that year it was indeed an awful thing to go

through the Liberties of Dublin." The effect of the distress was appalling—"the number of beings huddled together as they were, without anything to support them, created a famine; the dreadful fever of 1826, then called the 'famine fever,' was the consequence." Asked what became of the distressed weavers, he informed the Committee that numbers of them died, some had become amalgamated in the common distress, others he had seen as newsvendors or scavengers, several were in the Mendicity Institute, while a number had been assisted by charitable committees to emigrate to England. House property possessed by the silk weavers had become almost valueless; whole streets were nearly desolated; when houses had fallen they were not considered worth rebuilding. Mr. Sisson in his evidence admitted that there had been distress at former times in the Liberties of Dublin. It was due to various causes. Sometimes a famine occurred in the country, which was followed by distress in the city; or, again, a change of fashions, such as the use of muslin instead of silk, led to distress. But, he said, when these causes ceased, the effects ceased also, and trade returned to its natural prosperity. In the words of the witness, "there never was a period of any distress

in the Liberty of Dublin that lasted as it has now done since 1826 for six years, to the almost total extinction of its manufactures, the ruin of that part of the city where such manufactures exist, and the pauperism of many thousands of its once prosperous inhabitants."

Although Dublin became inundated with French silk goods after 1826, France would not receive the Irish silk fabrics in return. The Dublin manufacturers complained bitterly of this want of reciprocity. In 1829, at the suggestion of the silk manufacturers and operatives in Dublin, Mr. Sisson went with a petition to Parliament asking for an increase of the duty on French silks, and remonstrating on the want of reciprocity between France and the United Kingdom. His efforts in this direction proved fruitless.

A paper dealing with the state of the silk industry in Dublin in the year 1824 was handed in by the same witness. In that year there were 1,200 broad looms employed in the trade, together with 996 broad and narrow ribband engines. Ten silk mills were engaged in the throwing of silk. The total number of persons employed in all branches, such as winding, warping, throwing, dyeing, weaving, &c., and depending for subsistence thereon, was 6,000.

The number of looms employed in 1832 had been reduced to 150, and even these were only at work during six to nine months in the year. The ribband engine branch was almost annihilated. The number employed could not have exceeded from 30 to 40, scattered throughout the Liberties. In the throwing branch there were only about 60 persons employed, and they only partially. So prosperous had the silk throwing trade of Dublin been in 1824, prior to the reduction of duty on Italian thrown silks and the opening of the ports to French manufactures, that raw silks were sent from England to be thrown, not only in Dublin, but, the mills being full there, large quantities were sent to a place called Tullymore, about forty miles from Dublin, where a factory had been erected for many years for both throwing and manufacturing silk. This factory, with another about seven miles from Dublin had been given up, having proved unsuccessful.

Report on Hand-loom Weavers.

In 1838 a Committee was appointed to enquire into the condition of hand-loom weavers in the United Kingdom. A special commissioner, Mr. Otway, was sent to Dublin

to report upon the condition of the hand-loom weavers in that city. In the volume containing the evidence submitted to this commissioner and his report on the Dublin hand-loom weavers, there is some interesting information regarding the silk trade and the condition of the silk weavers in Dublin. It was stated in evidence that the trade of whole silk weaving had left Dublin. The manufacture of poplins, tabbareas, velvets, and ribbands still continued. The number of weavers had sunk to 400, of whom only 342 were employed. Of these, 280 were employed in the making of poplins and tabbareas, 30 in velvet making, and 32 in ribband weaving. Such were the limited dimensions of a trade which had occupied 6,000 persons only fourteen years previously. Even for the small number of weavers in the city employment was by no means regular. They were generally idle for a period of three months in the year.

Most of the weavers worked in their own homes. The master manufacturers hired out looms at the rate of 1s. 6d. per week for a plain loom and 2s. 6d. per week for a Jacquard loom. The expenses of winding and providing light amounted to 1s. 6d. per week. The weavers, working about fifteen hours a day, were, as a

rule, only able to earn from 12s. to 15s. per week on each loom, at the rate of payment then current. A few of them who were engaged on a higher class of work, such as brocades and figured poplins, earned about 25s. per week.

In the statement of the trade, handed in by a Committee of the silk weavers, the decline in the trade was attributed to "the superiority of England in her capital and machinery, which enabled her to undersell the Irish manufacturer; to a repeal of the prohibitory duties, and the protection afforded them by the Royal Dublin Society, under the Spitalfields Act, and to the introduction of the principles of free trade, from which time the trade in whole silk declined in Dublin at a railroad pace."

Mr. M'Intire, a silk manufacturer, attributed the decline to the effects of the Union, and the consequent withdrawal of a large number of consumers, the withdrawal of the protecting duties in 1826, want of capital, which caused the Irish to be driven out of even the home market, and the superiority of English capital and enterprise. Somewhat similar reasons were assigned by Mr. Atkinson, a member of the firm which is still so prominent in the poplin trade.

Combination of Weavers.

Another reason for the decline of the silk industry which must not be disregarded was assigned by two witnesses. Alderman Abbott, who had been for many years one of the most extensive silk manufacturers and mercers, stated that he had to leave the trade owing to combinations amongst the operatives. In his evidence he said: "Up to 1829 I was engaged in the wholesale silk trade employing a large number of looms, imported my own silk and had it manufactured here. I left the trade in consequence of the combinations amongst the workmen. I called my weavers together and they agreed to make a considerable reduction in the price of weaving; when they got the work out for the winter's trade the committee of the combinators took the shuttles from them and would not allow them to finish their work in the looms until I agreed to give the full London prices, in consequence of which I did not think it safe any longer to continue in the trade, and I retired from business." He further added, "I attribute the withdrawal of the trade in whole silks to the combinations of the men, who would not work at Manchester prices, but insisted on London prices, which the

manufacturer here could not afford to give." Mr. M'Connell, a silk manufacturer, gave evidence of a similar nature. "I myself," he said, "about nine months ago, made an agreement with men (who solicited me) to give them work under the usual price, trade being remarkably low. The body got information, and called a general meeting on that business, and came to the unanimous resolution at the meeting that no person, for the future, should work for me. These resolutions were passed, and in a few nights after my work were consumed by vitriol thrown in through the windows by unknown persons, and no person connected with the trade would work for me for fear of the body."

Mr. Otway in his report says:—"It cannot be doubted that illegal and dangerous combinations amongst the workmen have operated most injuriously on the trade, driven many of the most extensive manufacturers out of it, and deterred others from directing that capital and intelligence towards it, by which alone it could be preserved or enabled to compete with the other silk weaving districts of the Empire. If not checked, this system will speedily drive away the portion of the silk trade which now remains."

Protection of a trade by tariffs and encouragement by bounties were, in Mr. Otway's opinion, sources of weakness to it and sure causes of its ultimate decline. On no occasion did he let slip an opportunity of animadverting severely on their dangerous tendency. "Bounties and prohibitions," he says, "added to the fatal effects of the continued attempts on the part of the weavers to regulate and fix their rate of wages . . . almost totally destroyed the silk trade." In another place he says: "The protective duties granted at the Union, and the effects of the regulation of the rate of wages by the Dublin Society, prevented the industry of the silk weavers from being exercised, or a due regard being paid to economy, and the manufacturer trusted to his protective duties rather than to his own energy and skill." With regard to the future of the trade he says: "The protecting duties being removed and trade left free, the injurious combinations of the operatives being prevented, which from the value of the raw material is the more peculiarly injurious in the silk trade, I do not see why the silk trade in Dublin, under more enlightened conduct on the part of the legislature, the employers and the operatives, should not be revived."

Mr. Otway, who makes many useful remarks about the silk and other trades whose condition he investigated, seems to have been carried away at times by the ardour with which he pursued his free trade ideals. Had he lived a few decades later, and seen how industry after industry disappeared in Ireland under a free trade *regime*, and how on the other hand industries were introduced in other countries and grew into large dimensions, affording considerable employment, and able after a time to hold their own with long-established industries of a similar kind in other countries, he might not have been so ready to lay every evil at the door of protection. Were it not for the protection and encouragement given by the Irish Parliament, it is very doubtful if the silk industry would ever have taken root in Ireland. Having been planted there, it throve under the fostering care of the Irish legislature. Had that legislature continued to exist, or even had the Union duties been continued for a few decades longer, it is highly probable that Ireland to-day would have been able to hold her own in the world's markets. Mr. Otway condemned, and rightly condemned, the action of those who sought by a system of terrorising to keep wages up to a high level when the industry

was at such a critical period of its existence. From the evidence submitted there seems little doubt that this spirit of combination did injure the trade and prevented it from recovering from the heavy blows which had befallen it. Had the weavers shown a little more foresight and wisdom by endeavouring to meet the wishes of the masters in a reasonable manner, they would probably have been able to preserve branches of the industry which had passed away from Dublin. Too much stress, however, seems to have been laid by Mr. Otway upon the evil effects of combinations amongst the workmen. The commissioner was inclined to mistake effect for cause. Combination amongst the weavers to keep up the rate of wages was an effect rather than a cause of the decline. It was the abolition of the protecting duties in 1821, and the admission of the silk fabrics of France and other foreign countries, which had every facility by nature for cheap production, that crushed the Irish trade. Decline had set in, but that decline, while not occasioned by any combination on the part of the weavers, might have been checked by the exercise of a more liberal spirit on their part.

The setting up, the one against the other, of the interests of masters and men, was by no

means a peculiarity of the silk trade. It was common to many industries, not alone here, but in England and Scotland. Perhaps that was one reason which led to the abolition of the guild system and to the reform of corporations. It was about this time that the Guilds were abolished. Their place was taken by the trade unions of modern days. The old Corporation of Weavers, with its master, wardens, and brethren, ceased to exist about 1840. It was a body which had always cherished the interests of the trade, and was ever active in voicing its demands for the protection and encouragement of the industry. The hall where the meetings of the Corporation of Weavers were held is still known as "The Weavers' Hall," and is a well-known object of interest to visitors to old Dublin. It is interesting to relate that though it has passed out of the hands of the silk weavers as a body, it has passed by some means or other into the possession of a charitable society, whose good offices are, however, confined to a small section of the trade.

Period of Decay.

The history of the Dublin silk trade during the next three decades is rather uneventful.

It was a period of decay which witnessed the final disappearance of some branches of the industry. Amongst others velvet and ribband making disappeared. The trade became chiefly confined to the poplin manufacture. The decay of the industry was in great part due to external circumstances, such as British and foreign competition. It was during this period that the silk manufacture in Macclesfield and the silk and ribband weaving of Coventry made gigantic strides, largely owing to the use of the power loom. The Dublin manufacturers were, however, somewhat to blame for evincing a spirit of apathy, which it is not at all hard to understand, but which was not, however, creditable to them. The conduct of the operatives in endeavouring to keep up a high rate of payment in the face of trade depression was also short-sighted and imprudent.

The Franco-Prussian War.

A temporary revival of the industry took place about the year 1870. The Dublin manufacturers took advantage of the opportunity offered them by the breaking out of the Franco-Prussian war to push their wares in markets which had been until then almost

monopolised by the French manufacturers. The silk trade in France was completely disorganised by the disastrous war into which that country had entered. The continuance of hostilities enabled the Irish manufacturers to work up a large American trade, with the result that every weaver in Dublin was for a short time employed at high pressure. In the year 1870, according to the records of the trade, there were 443 looms employed. Most of these were engaged in the weaving of poplin.

This period of prosperity was unfortunately of short duration. The United States market which had been gained during the war has, however, never been completely lost. A good steady trade still continues to be carried on with the States. Shortly after the Franco-Prussian war came to an end depression again set in in the Dublin trade. Many weavers were compelled from lack of employment to emigrate to England or to America. In 1880 the trade had shrunk to 116 looms. At the end of another decade it was still further reduced to seventy looms. Efforts were made during this period to give a stimulus to the industry by encouragement from high sources. Royal patronage was conferred upon the poplin industry. Viceregal balls were held at which

poplin dresses, and only poplin dresses, were to be worn. It came to be considered almost an act of charity to buy a poplin dress—such was the low state to which the trade had fallen. This artificial stimulus was, as might have been expected, of little permanent advantage. The industry seemed to be dying a lingering death, and in the general opinion would soon become a mere matter of history.

Dr. Sullivan's Report.

The opinion of a very eminent Irishman, a high authority upon Irish industries—namely, Dr. W. K. Sullivan—upon the reasons which led to this decline, cannot be without interest. He was appointed to draw up the report of the Executive Committee of the Cork Industrial Exhibition of 1883, at which Exhibition some of the Dublin manufacturers exhibited the products of their looms. In the report Dr. Sullivan says: "The decay of the manufacture is, I believe, mainly due to the employers, who from want of foresight, indolence or carelessness, let their business get into a crystallised state, which no change of fashion, no competition of new fabrics, no improvements in processes or machines could influence. The

patterns brought from France in the reign of Louis XV. continued to furnish models for new designs, nay, were repeated without change." Further on he says, "So too little change was made in the thickness and weight of the fabrics. Poplins and silks thick enough to make curtains, and adapted for the long stiff trains and hoop cages worn in the eighteenth century, continued to be made when the cages had been long discarded, and sprightly round dances had replaced the stately minuet. No attempt was made to produce fabrics suitable to the existing tastes, especially as regards lightness, variety and moderate price. So the silk trade of Dublin slowly decayed beneath the weight of its really magnificent fabrics, the survival of another age, with an occasional appeal to the patriotism of the fashionable public to save it. The relief should have come within itself, and such a step was the introduction of single plain tabinets, due, I believe, to the Messrs. Pim, and the use of fine soft Australian wool in the weft yarns, as in the specimens exhibited in the fine case of that firm."

At the Cork Exhibition the firm mentioned obtained medals for Irish poplin, for silk handkerchiefs, and for furniture materials. Another

Dublin firm, Messrs. O'Reilly, Dunne & Co., of 30 College Green, which has since become merged in the firm of Messrs. Atkinson & Co., obtained medals for black and coloured silks, poplins and silks for vestments, and for Irish poplin weaving.

The advertisement of Irish poplins and other silken fabrics obtained at the Cork Exhibition seems to have conferred little permanent good upon the industry. Perhaps it was that the few remaining manufacturers had not yet been awakened to the necessity of keeping pace with the times. We find that in 1890 the number of looms working had sunk as low as 70. In the silk industry, as in human affairs, it proved, however, to be a case of the darkest hour preceding the dawn. When all hope of future prosperity for the trade seemed to have gone, a ray of hope shone forth owing to the fact that the poplin tie, to use an American phrase, had "caught on."

Revival of Trade.

The use of poplin for the manufacture of neckwear was not an entirely new idea. Poplin had been used for that purpose for the previous half century. But it was only about the year

1894 that the trade became in any way substantial. Since that year the poplin tie trade has been growing in volume, owing to the durability of poplin for that purpose, and the high reputation for excellence which that material has always held. It is now admitted on all hands that the poplin tie saved the industry. At the present time the poplin manufacture in Dublin, although of small dimensions, is in a healthy and prosperous condition, and shows every sign of great development.

As evidence of the steady growth in the trade during recent years the number of looms employed in different years may be quoted. In 1898 there were 87 looms engaged in the manufacture. In 1903 the number had increased to 117. The year 1911 saw 193 looms busily engaged. At the present time in all the branches of the trade, such as winding, warping, weaving, tiemaking, &c., there are about 650 persons employed. So this industry is becoming again one of some importance in the city.

There are four old-established firms engaged in the silk industry in Dublin. They are Messrs. Atkinson & Co., Elliot & Sons, Fry & Co., and Pim Bros. & Co. A fifth has recently been started by a Mr. Bergin in Camden Street.

All these firms confine their attention chiefly to poplin weaving and tiemaking. No whole silk is woven by any of them as part of their regular business. They make, however, whole silk for special orders. Ribbands are also made when specially ordered. Perhaps the firm which is most interesting from an historical point of view is that of Messrs. Fry & Co. This firm presents the greatest variety in its manufactures. It has continued to carry on some branches of the industry which are not carried on regularly elsewhere. Besides the manufacture of poplin for dresses and ties, Messrs. Fry & Co. manufacture poplin damask for window hangings, tabaret for the lining of motors and carriages and for furniture covering, silk fringes, carriage laces, silk ropes and tassels. In fact, in their establishment may be seen the silk industry of the eighteenth century in miniature.

What Poplin Is.

As already stated the Dublin manufacturers confine their attention chiefly to the manufacture of poplin. This article, it may be explained, is a combination of silk and wool. The material is woven with a silk warp and

woollen weft. It is so made that the surface on both sides of the cloth is all silk. The wool is used as a foundation. The combination of these two textiles gives a material of excellent appearance and wonderful durability. Only the best China silk is used in Dublin. The wool used is Australian long stapled merino wool of best quality. The fibres of the wool are burned off before it is put into the loom. All the poplin made in Dublin is handwoven. There are two kinds of loom in use—the plain loom used for poplin of a simple pattern, the Jacquard loom for figured poplin. Patterns of very intricate design can be woven by means of the latter loom with the same facility as the ordinary pattern. The high reputation of Irish poplin is due to the fact that the materials used have always been of the best quality. The Dublin manufacturers have never deviated from that high standard of excellence. They have consistently set their face against a device adopted by foreign manufacturers known as "weighting the silk." On the continent it is the general custom to allow silk to absorb some foreign substance, such as tin, when undergoing the dyeing process. The absorption of this or other foreign substance increases the weight of the silk, sometimes nearly twofold,

and gives the material into which the thread is woven an appearance of strength which it does not deserve. The pure silk thread wears much better than the adulterated thread, and hence has contributed to the high reputation of Irish poplin. In place of the thread used by the Dublin manufacturers being weighted in the dyeing process, it is returned to them much lighter than it was when first delivered into the dyer's hands. Gum and other impurities are removed from the thread during the process it undergoes, with the result that a pound of thrown silk is returned to the manufacturers as twelve ounces of pure dyed silk thread. The silk used is no longer dyed in Dublin, but all the wool is dyed by Messrs. Eustace, a firm which has had a long connection with the Dublin silk trade.

Its Uses.

The purposes for which poplin is used are various. It is used for ladies' dresses, court trains, blouses, mantles, opera cloaks, trimmings, vests, smoking suits, cassocks, vestments and church requisites, professional gowns, sashes, art embroidery, wall drapery, ladies' handbags, scarves, and ties. This long but by

no means exhaustive list of articles for which poplin is used shows what great room for development there is in the trade. Of the excellence of the material there can be no doubt. It only needs to be brought more prominently before the people of this and other countries to have its use more widely extended. Most people are unaware that poplin is used for any other purpose than for dress material or for tie making.

The use of poplin for the making of ladies' dresses has been the main-stay of the trade since its foundation. The amount of poplin so used is still considerable. It is not, however, as large as it might be. Poplin presents a showy, finished appearance, which is much regarded by ladies, and is withal possessed of great durability. Now, herein lies the point of complaint with many people against this article. What should be regarded as its greatest recommendation is in reality considered a drawback. The complaint of many ladies is that "it wears too well." In fact there is no wearing out of a poplin dress. It will outlast several silk dresses, and only cost the price of one of them. With the constant change of ladies' fashions, it is easy to understand why poplin is not the highly favoured article which it should be on

account of its excellent appearance and quality. A fair trade, however, is still done in dress poplins, a considerable quantity being sent abroad. A progressive spirit characterises the Dublin poplin manufacturers of to-day. To render their manufacture still more attractive to their customers they have placed on the market a material of lighter texture known as "gossamer poplin," which is made of silk and a very fine wool. It is hoped that this material will gain favour with the ladies. Gossamer poplin may be the means of opening up a larger trade on the continent and in warm climates where the ordinary poplin might be considered a trifle too heavy.

The amount of poplin consumed in the making of dresses, blouses, mantles, and other articles of ladies' attire is far exceeded by the consumption of poplin for gentlemen's neckwear. Ties were originally made of this article in order to use up remnants of the material which could not be utilised for dresses. Now the looms turn out more poplin specially for this purpose than for all other purposes combined. The Irish poplin tie has gained a name for excellence in British and foreign markets which has never been acquired by ties of any other material. The demand is increasing

year by year, and, judging from the orders which continue pouring in from all parts of the world, it seems likely to increase to great dimensions. It should be the aim of the Dublin manufacturers to become tie manufacturers, not alone to the Royal Family and to several of the Crowned Heads of Europe as at present, but to the whole world.

The other purposes already mentioned for which poplin is used it is unnecessary to discuss in detail. The prosperity of the poplin tie trade is reflected in the increased prosperity of many of these minor branches. With regard to the use of poplin for professional gowns which, of course, in this country can never exceed a limited amount, it is gratifying to record that the National University has proved itself worthy of its name by officially adopting poplin in place of silk for the academic costume of all its members, from the Chancellor down to the newly-fledged graduate. There is, however, one branch which requires special mention, as it is one which might easily be of greater dimensions than it is—namely, the vestments and church requisites branch. The use of poplin for sacerdotal vestments and other purposes is showing signs of increase. The demand, however, is by no means as great as

it might be. A considerable quantity of church vestments is annually imported from Italy, Belgium, and other countries. The Irish clergy are, however, becoming more keenly alive to the economic needs of the country. They realise that the spiritual welfare of their flocks can be better catered for at home than it would be in foreign countries, whither so many Irish men and women have had to emigrate. Consequently it is a duty incumbent upon them to do all that lies in their power to keep the Irish people at home. They can do this by encouraging the use of Irish poplin and other native manufactures.

The great advantage to a country of an industry like poplin or tabaret weaving is that, for the value of the output, a considerable amount of money is spent in wages. The item of wages forms a large part of the cost of production of poplin or other material of a kindred nature. On the other hand, in an industry like brewing or distilling only a small proportion of the value of the article is due to the labour employed. The turnover of the poplin trade in 1911 totalled £70,000. Of that sum at least one-third was paid in wages to the workers. Hence the economic importance of developing this industry is apparent.

Rivals in Trade.

The Dublin poplin manufacturers have by no means a monopoly of the trade. They have rivals in the French, Swiss, Germans, and English. These foreign manufacturers make a material composed of silk and wool, which is variously known as bengaline, ducape, or poplin. It is woven on the power loom and not hand-woven as is the Dublin article. Foreign manufacturers have often endeavoured to pass off their goods as "Irish poplin." Of fair competition in the trade of poplin weaving the Dublin manufacturers could not reasonably complain. But their foreign rivals have placed on the market various imitations of poplin, composed of silk and cotton, or even of mercerised cotton alone, which are sold as poplin. "Poplin ties" have been purchased in London at the rate of one penny each. Against such unfair competition it is very difficult to compete.

The Irish manufacturers assert that poplin originated in Dublin. The name is said by them to be derived from "papeline," the name of a material made at Avignon, which was the residence of the Popes in the fourteenth century. Papeline was probably some silken fabric

made for or patronised by the Sovereign Pontiff. The Irish manufacturers claim that they alone are entitled to the use of the name poplin for the product of their looms. The foreign manufacturer has, however, not only borrowed the name, but has even added the appellation of "Irish" to it. The Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, at the instance of the Irish manufacturers, have endeavoured to put a stop to this unfair competition. Several prosecutions have taken place in England for selling as "Irish poplin" materials which were poplin of foreign manufacture, or else some imitation composed of silk and cotton, or of mercerised cotton alone. This unfair competition still continues, and is doing much damage, as these foreign manufacturers trade on the acknowledged excellence of the Irish article. The great difficulty under which the home manufacturers labour is that the name poplin, although it gained currency from being applied to the Dublin fabric composed of silk and wool, is claimed by the trade to be the name of a particular kind of weave, and to be no indication of the materials of which an article is composed. As a means of greater precaution the Dublin manufacturers have been compelled to adopt the addition of the words

"genuine" or "real." Hence the products of the Dublin looms are now known as "genuine Irish poplin" or "real Irish poplin."

Export Trade.

A large export trade is carried on in Irish poplin. It finds its way in considerable quantities to the United States, Canada, the Argentine, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, India, in fact, all over the civilised world. An export trade to continental countries is carried on, but to a small extent only. The British market has so far been the most important, but it seems likely to be overshadowed in the future by the colonial market.

The foreign trade is, however, hampered by restrictions in the shape of heavy tariffs. The United States tariff is particularly heavy. An *ad valorem* duty of 60 per cent. is charged, to which is added a further duty of 64 cents per pound weight. The price of poplin in the United States is thereby doubled.* The duty in Canada is considerably less, being 25 per cent. A rebate of 2½ per cent. off the duty is allowed to the manufactures of the United Kingdom. The Australian duty on poplin is about 25 per cent. The duty on Irish poplin

* The import duty on poplin will be considerably reduced when the present United States Tariff Bill becomes law.

in that country is higher than the duty on imitation poplin goods. The genuine article, being composed of silk and wool, is taxed more heavily than the continental imitation of silk and cotton, the reason being that wool is one of the products of Australia, and consequently, the Federal Government taxes all manufactured goods composed in whole or in part of wool in order to encourage home manufacture. In South Africa the duty is lower than in Canada or Australia. An *ad valorem* duty of 15 per cent. is charged, off which a rebate of 3 per cent. is allowed to goods manufactured in the United Kingdom.

On the question of the suitability of the present fiscal system there is a want of unanimity amongst the Dublin manufacturers. The present prosperity of the industry is certainly an argument in favour of the retention of the present system. There is, however, little doubt that better terms for British and Irish goods could be secured if the people of these islands had the power of bargaining which a protective system would afford.

Employment in Trade.

The general features of the industry having been indicated, we must turn our attention

to the human element in it, a by no means unimportant one. As already mentioned, about 650 persons find employment in the Dublin silk industry. The nature of the industry is such that certain divisions of it are peculiarly suited for female labour, while the most important branch, that of weaving, is one in which the men excel. In winding, warping and in the tie department, women and girls are employed. In fitting up the looms and in weaving the cloth men alone are employed in the workships, although female labour is under certain conditions permitted at home. As both a wholesale and a retail trade are carried on in addition to the business of manufacturing, a considerable number of persons of both sexes find employment in the commercial department.

Most of the weaving is carried on in workshops under the supervision of the employers themselves or their overseers. A few weavers, perhaps a score at the outside, still continue weaving in their own homes. These men get the materials from one or other of the master manufacturers, weave the poplin at home, and return it in a finished state to their employers. They own the looms upon which they work, and which they have generally been assisted in

purchasing by the union to which they belong. In the workshops all the looms are the property of the employers. Until a few years ago it was customary to charge a weekly loom rent of 1s. 6d. per week to the weavers, but this charge has now been abolished.

The industry is carried on on the piece-work system. An elaborate scale of prices has been fixed for the different stages in the manufacture, and for the different qualities of material woven. The rate of payment for any particular class of work is fixed by the weavers themselves, and when approved of by the masters becomes the regular rate in the trade. The more difficult the work, the more intricate the pattern, and the richer the material the higher is the rate of payment. The piece-work system suits the trade. It would scarcely be abandoned by the operatives without very strong reasons. The weekly earnings of weavers range from £1 to £2. A good man can easily earn 35s. per week. In addition to a weaver's earnings on his own loom he is entitled to a certain proportion of what is earned by his apprentice or apprentices. This proportion varies from one-sixth to one-half according to the standing of the apprentice. So the full income of a master weaver may easily exceed

£2 per week. The earnings of the women employed range from 5s. to 35s. Women employed in warping, a specially skilled occupation, earn from 25s. to 35s. per week. Girls start at a small initial wage and earn up to 12s. per week. Tie makers can earn from 15s. to 16s. a week on piecework. Thus the earnings of both men and women in this industry compare very favourably with the wages earned in other occupations.

The piecework system is not without its disadvantages. It leaves the worker free to come and go as he pleases. A weaver can take a day or two off whenever the whim seizes him. This want of regularity has sometimes its ill effects upon the worker. When a pressure of business takes place the system proves somewhat inconvenient to the employers, as the output in the industry is more or less at the mercy of the operatives themselves. However, on the whole, the system works well, and the masters have little fault to find with it.

Shop's Delegates.

In every workshop there exist two officers, known as shop's delegates, who are selected by the men in each workshop. Their duty is to

act as umpires in cases of dispute between the masters and men, or between the men and their apprentices. If there is any doubt as to the rate of payment for any particular class of work, the question is submitted to the shop's delegates. These officers, in fact, exercise a kind of general superintendence over the work in each work-shop. If a man idles his time, works irregularly, or does his work unsatisfactorily, the shop's delegates remonstrate with him, and generally with success. If an apprentice considers that he is not being paid his due allowance, or otherwise regards himself as being unjustly treated, he submits his case to the shop's delegates, who endeavour to settle matters. Again, if a man is unable to work through ill-health or other cause, the shop's delegates look after the interests of his apprentices during his absence. The institution of these officers is a recent idea. It was first put into practice in Messrs. Atkinson's work-shop, where it was found to work so well that the other firms quickly adopted the idea.

According to a rule of the trade a man may have three, but not more than three, looms at work at the same time. Thus he can have two other looms running besides the one upon which he himself is engaged. He can have these extra

looms in the workshop or in his own home. In the workshop he can only employ male apprentices upon the looms. At home he may employ his wife and daughter or even two daughters upon the looms. In exceptional cases the trade permits the widow of a weaver to do work in her own home. In no other circumstances than those mentioned is a woman allowed to engage in the weaving industry. On no account would the members of the trade consent to an employer engaging a woman to weave in the workshop.

Apprenticeship System.

The system of apprenticeship is an interesting one. The silk weavers are very conservative, and endeavour to keep their trade as much as possible a close corporation. It is a rule of the trade that nobody but the son or grandson of a weaver may become an apprentice to it. The eldest son of a weaver need serve no apprenticeship. He is entitled to work at the loom as soon as he attains the age at which apprentices are admitted. The second and other sons of a weaver and any others who are eligible for admission to the trade must serve an apprenticeship of seven years. The

apprentice is bound by indenture to his master, and is not recognised by the employer. The payment for work done by apprentices is made to the master, who is responsible for any work so done. The master allows his apprentice a certain proportion of the payment for the work done by him. During the first three years the apprentice receives half of the earnings assignable to his work. During the fourth and fifth years he receives two-thirds. Three-fourths of what he earns is his share in the sixth year. In the final year, the seventh, the apprentice gets five-sixths of the money paid on account of his work. Thus, with the apprentice's increasing skill, his share of the payment for his work increases, while his master retains a share which compensates him for his trouble in teaching the apprentice his craft. The rule of the trade has been stated to be that only the son or grandson of a weaver is eligible for admission to it. This rule is only departed from under extraordinary circumstances, and even then with great reluctance. If the trade is enjoying a period of great prosperity, and every available weaver is engaged, while all the sons or grandsons of weavers who wish to be admitted to the trade are apprenticed, then, in that case, if there exists a demand for more

weavers, which cannot be supplied from the weavers' own families, the rule of the trade may be suspended so as to admit outsiders. Such a state of affairs occurred in recent years owing to the great stimulus given to the trade by the development of the poplin tie department. At the request of the master manufacturers the members of the trade agreed to allow outsiders into it. Thus it may be seen that, while the silk weavers of Dublin are careful in safeguarding their own interests, they are alive to the welfare of the industry as a whole, and will not allow selfish considerations to stand in the way of its development.

Though it is the rule of the trade that an apprentice should serve seven years before becoming a fully qualified weaver, the rule has been sometimes broken in cases where its enforcement would have worked hardship. Thus in past years, when the trade was not in a very flourishing condition, it sometimes happened that a weaver could not supply work to his apprentice, and the boy might have to abandon the trade for a period extending over a year or two. In such cases, the governing body of the trade allowed the idle period to count in the period of apprenticeship. Thus it has happened that an apprentice who only worked

five years in a workshop was allowed, nevertheless, to apply for work on his own account at the expiration of the seven-year period.

The apprentice of to-day is admitted to be a better and more useful individual than the apprentice of former times. In the days when an apprentice served his time in a workroom in his master's house, he often spent the whole seven years doing the one kind of work, say, weaving plain poplin. In the modern workshop, if not called upon himself to do work of an intricate nature, he at least sees weaving of all grades of difficulty carried on around him. He becomes familiar with every stage in the process, from the fitting up of the harness of the loom to the finishing process, as he sees work in every stage continually about him. Moreover, the competition which is engendered by the mere fact of a number working together has a beneficial effect upon him.

The Dublin Silk Trade.

The control of the internal affairs of the industry is in the hands of a body known as the "Dublin Silk Trade." Membership of this body is open to all the freemen of the trade, including employers. In this it resembles the

Guild of former days. In practice only the working weavers attend its meetings, although on extraordinary occasions the employers exercise their right of membership and take part in its deliberations. Hence it is not a regular "Trade Union." For simplicity's sake, however, we shall allude to the body as the "Union." The term "Silk Trade" is still retained, although no silk is regularly manufactured in Dublin, the trade for all practical purposes being confined to poplin weaving and a little tabaret weaving. This Union took the place of the old Corporation of Weavers, which was abolished about the year 1840. Its ranks are open to weavers of all descriptions in the industry. Thus, if Dublin should again have a velvet or ribband industry, weavers in those branches would be admitted to membership. The Union exercises a beneficial influence upon the trade, and is regarded by the master manufacturers with favour. Its chief objects are to safeguard the interests of members, to relieve them or their families in cases of unemployment, illness or death, to fix rates of payment for various classes of work, to control admission to the trade, and to regulate its affairs generally. Though jealous of the interests of its members, the Union is also careful to see that the just

rights of the masters are respected. Thus, where a man has abandoned work in any workshop, whilst owing money to his employer, the Union will not permit him to accept work elsewhere until the debt to his former employer is paid. In the rare case of a man making away with materials belonging to his employer, or wilfully damaging them, the Union will either compensate the employer directly, or else compel the defaulter to do so, before allowing him to seek similar work elsewhere in Dublin. In time past the Union has assisted weavers to emigrate to England or to America. Happily the need for such assistance no longer exists. The Union also assists a man to purchase a loom if he wishes to have one in his own home. The Union purchases the loom for the weaver, charging him a small weekly sum until the full amount is repaid.

Future of the Industry.

With regard to the future of the poplin industry, present conditions seem to augur a period of great prosperity. The decline in the manufacture of poplin in the past was due to the fact that it went out of fashion for ladies' dresses. The decline in the use of

poplin for that purpose has been more than counterbalanced in recent years by the increased demand for it for the purpose of making gentlemen's ties and other articles. The poplin tie has in fact been the salvation of the industry. It is now its great mainstay. The demand for ties of this material is increasing year by year. From all parts of the globe orders are received. There seems little room for doubt that a great field for development lies in this direction. That the trade might also be considerably developed in other directions, such as the making of poplin for church purposes, motor scarves, evening dresses, evening shoes, ladies' handbags, belts and other articles seems equally certain. There is no other material of a similar nature that keeps its appearance and wears so well as poplin. It is for the ingenuity of the manufacturers to discover new purposes for which the material may be used, and then to put the articles upon the market. Persistent advertisement at home and abroad by means of newspapers and journals, exhibiting at industrial exhibitions, and the appointment of agents in various parts of the globe should tend to foster a large trade. Owing to the extraordinary way in which people of the Irish race are scattered all

over the world, it should not be a difficult matter to extend the use of this article, even in the most out-of-the-way corner of civilisation.

The manufacturers of to-day are showing themselves keenly alive to the welfare of the trade. They are constantly introducing new colourings and new patterns, in order to please the everchanging public taste. Cloth of varying degrees of width, 24 inches, 32 inches, and 40 inches, is woven to suit the different purposes for which it may be required. The introduction of the 40-inch poplin has been much appreciated, as it is particularly suitable for dresses and mantles. This constant attention on the part of the manufacturers to the need of the industry, and their willingness to make new experiments, is productive of a good effect upon the industry.

The question may be asked: "Why not introduce power looms in place of hand looms in the industry, cheapen the cost of production, and thereby increase the demand for poplin"? Well, the manufacturers have given serious consideration to that question. They have experimented and are experimenting with the power loom. They have come to the conclusion, however, that hand loom weaving suits the material better. The slow, steady

weaving by hand produces a cloth of a texture which it would be difficult to obtain by means of a power loom. The great difficulty in the way of introducing the power loom is that it would be required to weave a material, not of one thread, such as silk or wool, but of both. In combining these two, it is found that the power loom leads to more breakages than is the case with the hand loom. A defect in weaving on the latter can be remedied instantly, whereas it would not be so with the power loom. The manufacturers have therefore decided for the present to retain the hand loom. Another consideration which weighs heavily with them is that Irish poplin has gained its name as being a handwoven article. Its popularity might fall off were it made on the power loom, just as lace is less valued when machine made than when hand-made.

However, if the Dublin manufacturers prefer not to risk the poplin industry by making it a power loom industry, no such objection lies against making silk on the power loom. Might not this branch, the most important branch formerly, be reintroduced in Dublin? Owing to the industrial revival of recent years, and the gradual growth of a feeling in favour of Irish manufactures, there seems little doubt

that a fair demand would exist for Irish-made silks. The tradition of the silk trade is still fresh in the minds of Dublin people, and the opening of a silk factory would be eagerly welcomed by them.

Another branch that might well be developed is one of which mention has already been made, namely, tabaret weaving. Tabaret is a mixture of silk and linen, and is an excellent material for furniture covering. Messrs. Fry & Co. still continue manufacturing this article. It was once an important branch of the silk industry. The firm mentioned have executed orders for tabaret from India, Morocco, and Japan. The furniture in Dublin Castle has been renovated with tabaret from the looms of the firm. As the furniture industry in Ireland is growing, it seems not unlikely that the demand for Irish-made tabaret will grow with it. There are still about a dozen weavers in Dublin who have worked from time to time at tabaret weaving. It would be a pity were this branch of the silk industry allowed to die out with the disappearance of these men.

To conjure up the vision of Dublin again the centre of a prosperous silk industry, divided into many branches, is very pleasant. Yet it is a vision which might easily be realised. Dublin has the largest brewery in the world. Fifty or

sixty years sufficed to build up an important biscuit-making industry. Shall it be said that Irish brains and energy are incapable of doing the same with the silk industry, which was once the staple industry of Dublin ?

The advent of an Irish Parliament, having its seat in Dublin, is an event eagerly looked forward to by the majority of the people of Ireland. Political circumstances in this country have caused an expenditure of time, energy, and money, which in the ordinary course would have been spent in developing the resources of the country. If once this great question were settled the Irish people, as a whole, would be free to settle down to a consideration of the economic needs of Ireland. In the event of that happy settlement Dublin would regain the position of political and social centre of Ireland, the centre from which would radiate movements in art, literature, philosophy, and nationality. The vanished glories of the past would in great part return. Dublin would again live, in place of existing in a state of decadence as it has done since the Union. The industries of the city would receive a much needed fillip. Amongst those industries there are scarcely any which would be likely to develop more than the silk industry, the staple trade of the city in the days of a native Parliament.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I.

INDUSTRIAL DUBLIN SINCE 1698.

The following authorities have been consulted and made use of in this essay :—

Boate—Natural History of Ireland.
Petty—Political Anatomy of Ireland.
Dobbs—Essay upon Trade of Ireland
Prior—Observations upon Trade of Ireland.
Hely-Hutchinson—Commercial Restraints of Ireland.
Arthur Young—Tour in Ireland.
Sheffield—Essay on Trade of Ireland.
Newenham—Ireland.
O'Connor—History of the Irish Catholics.
Warburton, Whitelaw and Walsh—History of the City of Dublin.
Whitelaw—Essay on Population of Dublin.
Walsh—Ireland Sixty Years Ago.
Martin—Ireland Before and After the Union.
Kane—Industrial Resources of Ireland.
S. & B. Webb—History of Trades Unionism.

Morewood—History of Inebriating Liquors.
Scarisbrick—Spirit Manual.
Barnard—Distilleries of the United Kingdom.

The following Parliamentary Papers :—

Report on Petition of Corporation of Brewers, 1773.
Report from Committee on the State of Manufactures of this Kingdom, 1784 (Irish H. C. Journals).
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Report from Select Committee on the State of the Poor, Ireland, 1830.
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Second Report from Railway Commissioners, Ireland, 1837–8.
Report on Handloom Weavers, 1840.
Report from Select Committee on Irish Industries, 1885.
The Census Returns.
The Calendar of the Ancient Records of Dublin.
Old Almanacs and Directories of Dublin.
Report of Committee of Dublin Society *re* Spinning of Worsted Yarn (1820).
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APPENDIX II.

THE SILK INDUSTRY IN DUBLIN.

The following authorities have been consulted and made use of in this essay :—

Journals of the Irish House of Commons.
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Parliamentary Papers and Accounts :—

Parliamentary Account, Vol. VII., 1821.
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Warburton, Whitelaw and Walsh—History of the City of Dublin, 1818.

Smiles—The Huguenots in Great Britain and Ireland.
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